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## Factors Responsible for Work-Life Conflict: A Study Comparing the Teaching and Legal Professions

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Graduate Program in Education  
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Master of Education  
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FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR WORK-LIFE CONFLICT: A STUDY COMPARING  
THE TEACHING AND LEGAL PROFESSIONS

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Waleska A. Vernon

Graduate Program in Education

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Education

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of work-life conflict (WLC) as experienced by mid-career members of the teaching and legal professions with a view to both determining the extent to which the universal WLC factors identified by previous research apply to specific professions and identifying any WLC factors unique to the teaching and legal fields. Participants included four business law firm lawyers and four teachers working in large urban Ontario settings, all with at least five years of experience working in their field. A phenomenological design using semi-structured interviews was employed. Eight themes were identified for teachers and six themes were identified for lawyers. The results of this study suggest that there is a great deal of overlap in the factors responsible for the WLC experienced by those in the teaching and legal fields (including hours worked, workload, work pace and spillover); where the two groups appear to differ is in the presence of factors that increase resiliency to WLC (including sources of job satisfaction and perceived meaningfulness of work), thus allowing the teachers in this study to more effectively cope with the WLC they experienced than their counterparts in the legal field.

*Keywords:* work-life conflict, work-life balance, teaching, law, job satisfaction, meaningfulness of work, resiliency, coping strategies

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Concern for work-life balance (WLB) is garnering a great deal of interest as the negative effects of imbalance between work and non-work roles are becoming increasingly apparent. The demands of high-stress careers not only take their toll on the physical and psychological wellbeing of workers but also translate into increasing costs to employers related to lost productivity and employee turnover. Thus, WLB is an important issue for workers and employers alike.

WLB issues are of particular relevance in the high-pressure field of law. I came to be interested in the issue of WLB in the context of my nine-year legal career. I left the practice of law in large part due to the very high work-life conflict (WLC) I experienced working in a large business law firm in Toronto, Ontario. My experience is not unique: law firm practice is characterized by high burnout and turnover rates, and lawyers are renowned for working long hours under the pressure of excessive role demands, including requirements to meet tight deadlines and high billable hours targets in a highly competitive work environment (Joudrey & Wallace, 2009).

Another demanding profession in which burnout and turnover rates are high is the teaching profession. Teachers, like lawyers, work long hours (many of which are outside of regular school hours) but face very different job stressors, such as large class sizes, student misbehaviour, parent management and the overarching issue of teacher role expansion (Cinamon, Rich & Westman, 2007). Thus, while both lawyers and teachers are required to meet job requirements under high levels of stress and may experience significant conflict between their work and non-work roles, there appears to be little overlap in the variables contributing to teacher WLC and lawyer WLC.

The career and organizational literature has identified a number of general factors that may be responsible for WLC in a variety of professions. However, the applicability to specific professions, like law and teaching, of these universal WLC factors is not yet clear. Similarly, it is not yet clear whether the WLC factors identified for specific professions are applicable to other professions. The goal of this study was to compare the experience of WLC of members of the legal and teaching professions – two demanding professions which appear to be subject to very different work structures and job demands – in order to test the universality of the WLC factors that have been identified in the previous literature, as well as to identify any WLC factors unique to the teaching and legal professions.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Work-life conflict (WLC) arises when the cumulative demands of work and non-work roles are incompatible in some way, such that fulfillment of the obligations of one role make the satisfaction of the requirements of another role more difficult. Duxbury and Higgins (2006) identified three components to WLC. The first is role overload, which exists when the cumulative demands of multiple roles on the individual's time and energy are excessive, such that the performance of one or more of the roles suffers. A second component of WLC is interference from work to family, when demands from the work role make the fulfillment of family obligations more difficult. The third component of WLC is interference from family to work, when family demands inhibit performance of work requirements.

While a single, comprehensive theory to describe and explain WLC has not yet been developed, the general career and organizational literature has identified two major theoretical models to explain the phenomenon of WLC: the rational model and the job strain model.

According to the rational model, WLC increases in proportion to the number of hours spent in each of the work and family domains (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The rational model also predicts that total time spent in either role will correlate with role overload (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985).

The job strain model (Karasek, 1979) identifies two primary forces conducive to stress: role demands and perceived control. This model holds that jobs with similar demands may result in very different levels of stress depending on the degree of control perceived by the individual. According to this model, the most stressful jobs will be those characterized

by highly demanding tasks combined with low control.

The general WLC literature discussed below has identified WLC factors which generally support both the rational model and the job strain model. The common factors that have been presented as universal WLC factors include number of hours worked, perceived control, workload pressure and management support. The meaningfulness of work (that is, the extent to which the individual has high autonomy, responsibility and creativity and feels that he or she is contributing to society) has also been suggested as a factor which may reduce WLC (McCrea, Boreham & Ferguson, 2011).

The applicability of these universal WLC factors to specific professions is unclear. Not all professions generate the same types and levels of stress or role conflict, and an hour of work in one profession (or by one individual) may be experienced quite differently from an hour of work in another profession (or by another individual). What constitutes workload pressure or management support in one profession could also be very different from that in another. Similarly, meaningfulness of work may be more important in some professions than in others and, indeed, what makes work meaningful to one individual may be considerably different from what makes work meaningful to another. Individual differences in perceived control could similarly be significant both between and within professions.

### **Quantitative Studies Examining Universal WLC Factors**

Duxbury, Higgins and Lee (1994) conducted a survey of 20,836 Canadian public and private-sector employees representing 408 different Canadian population centres in order to test both the rational model and the job strain model of WLC. All participants had full-time employment and at least one child living at home between the ages of 6 and 12. The survey

assessed the correlation between perceived control and hours spent in both work and family roles, on the one hand, and WLC (including role overload, work-to-family interference and family-to-work interference) on the other.

The authors found that women spent more total hours in work and family activities than men and also experienced greater role overload, consistent with the rational model of WLC. However, contrary to the rational model, women experienced significantly greater work-to-family interference than men notwithstanding that they spent less time in their work role than their male counterparts. The authors suggested two potential explanations for this finding. First, gender role expectations may lead women to feel more conflict as a result of time spent in the non-traditional role of paid work. Second, responsibility for childcare and housework tasks that must be completed prior to or after the workday are more likely to fall to women; the timing of such tasks makes conflict with paid work more likely.

The authors also found support for the job strain model of WLC. Those participants with low control experienced significantly greater role overload, work-to-family interference and family-to-work interference notwithstanding that both high- and low-control groups spent similar amounts of time in work and family roles. As noted by the authors, these results suggest that the rational model alone does not fully account for WLC; perceptions of control are important even when role demands are the same.

Two recent studies conducted in Australia advance our understanding of WLC factors with respect to both public and private sector employees. Allan, Loudoun and Peetz (2007) surveyed over 900 employees in Queensland, Australia to assess the influence of work hours, workload pressure (amount and pace of work), management support and employee control on WLC. Data was drawn from 32 organizations from a broad range of

industries, including a law firm, a public sector department and a hospital, among others.

The researchers found correlations between WLC and each of the four variables measuring job demands.

A second Australian study relevant to the area of work-life conflict is McCrea et al.'s (2011) examination of the effects of participative management (that is, employee involvement in organizational goal-setting and problem-solving) on WLC in public sector employees. Participative management is believed to increase employees' job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation about work and thereby to reduce employee turnover. The researchers conducted a survey of 2,990 public sector employees in Queensland, Australia, including a broad range of administrative, policing, utility, health, education, agricultural and legal workers. The researchers concluded that participative management reduces WLC in the public sector by way of its influence on four other work attributes: workload, work uncertainty, flexible hours and meaningful work, with workload being the strongest predictor of WLC.

The role of different household structures in WLC was the focus of a recent survey of 24 Dutch organizations by ten Brummelhuis and van der Lippe (2010). This study examined the relationship between different types of WLB support (flexible work arrangements, a family-responsive work culture and supervisors' social support), household structure (single, couple with no children and married with children) and work outcomes (as measured by work performance and helping behaviours aimed at co-workers). The researchers surveyed employees in four industrial sectors, including a law firm. The authors found that singles benefited most from flexible work arrangements, while a family-responsive work culture was negatively related to helping behaviours. The reverse was true

for parents: flexible work arrangements were not related to better work outcomes (that is, increased productivity and cooperative behaviours in the workplace) for parents, perhaps because of the blurring of work and family roles that results from telecommuting. Supervisor support appeared to be particularly important for couples.

### **Qualitative Studies Examining Universal WLC Factors**

A recent descriptive field study took a qualitative research approach to the examination of strategies used by professional women to balance the competing demands of work and family (Grant-Vallone & Ensher, 2011). The authors conducted in-depth interviews of 23 professional women from Southern California with a wide range of career backgrounds, including psychology, law, education and veterinary medicine. The researchers found that supervisor support, personal support and satisfactory childcare were key to finding a balance between work and non-work roles.

### **Quantitative Studies Examining Teacher WLC Factors**

Three studies conducted by Cinamon and colleagues examined the conflict experienced by teachers with families in Israel. In the first of these studies (Cinamon & Rich, 2005), the authors surveyed 187 female Israeli teachers regarding the stress and support variables related to their experience of work-to-family conflict (WFC) and family-to-work conflict (FWC). The authors assessed the importance attributed by participants to each of their life roles (work, family or dual-role); teachers' perceptions of the conflict between work and family roles; manager and spousal support; and demographic variables such as level of school taught (elementary, junior or senior high school), years of experience



and number of hours spent each week in schoolwork and housework. The authors found that the majority of female teachers in their sample attributed equal importance to their work and family roles (that is, they fell into the dual-role category), consistent with earlier findings regarding women in historically male-dominated professions such as law (Cinamon & Rich, 2002a, b). According to the authors, this finding suggests that WFC research regarding women in non-traditional occupations may apply to teachers as well. The authors also found that teachers showed higher levels of WFC than FWC, similar again to their counterparts in other high-stress professions (Cinamon & Rich, 2002a, b), with high school teachers reporting the greatest levels of WFC and junior high school teachers reporting the lowest WFC. Teachers with the least experience (1-5 years) had the greatest FWC, perhaps because such teachers would be more likely than their more experienced counterparts to have very young children.

A second study by Cinamon et al. (2007) sought to explore the extent to which the generic WFC factors identified in the literature apply to the teaching profession and the role of profession-specific factors in the experience of WFC for teachers. The authors surveyed 230 married female and male Israeli high school teachers working in schools in one low- and middle-income school district. The generic factors examined included number and flexibility of work hours, and support from managers, colleagues and spouses. The profession-specific factors included class size, investment in student misbehaviour and investment in parent relations. The authors found that profession-specific factors (particularly investment in student misbehaviour and investment in relations with parents) were the best predictors of WFC, although generic factors such as manager support also played a role. Contrary to previous findings in WFC research, the authors found a positive

correlation between flexible work arrangements and WFC. The authors suggest that this may be one instance in which the generic findings of WFC research do not apply to teaching since, in the educational context, flexibility means the ability to leave school early and take schoolwork home, resulting in teachers spending more time at home on school-related tasks. The authors were surprised by the finding that the profession-specific factors of class sizes and number of students with special needs did not appear to contribute to teachers' WFC.

Cinamon and Rich (2010) used a sample of 322 married female teachers to investigate the role of different types of support (managerial, collegial and spousal) as predictors of work-to-family and family-to-work conflict and facilitation. The authors found that managerial support was the strongest predictor of both conflict and facilitation in the work domain, but none of the three types of social support correlated with conflict or facilitation in the family domain. Further, family-to-work conflict was predictive of family-to-work facilitation and vice versa, but there was no such relationship between work-to-family conflict and work-to-family facilitation. The authors concluded that conflict and facilitation appear to be distinct constructs with different antecedents; however, the authors noted that this finding might have been due to limitations in the way these constructs are defined and measured.

A recent study (Moon & Roh, 2010) investigated the effectiveness of family-friendly policies in elementary schools in South Korea. The authors surveyed 127 elementary school teachers (91.3% of whom were female) to examine individual perceptions of these policies. While a balance between work and family domains was the best predictor of job motivation, work performance and morale, teachers' knowledge and uptake of family-friendly work policies did not have an effect on job motivation, work performance or morale, except in

those cases where teachers had difficulty making use of a family-friendly policy (which had a strong negative correlation with job motivation).

### **Qualitative Studies Examining Teacher WLC Factors**

Two qualitative studies examined the effects of an expanding work role on teachers' working conditions. Relying on extensive ethnographic data collected from two California high schools over a two-year period, Bartlett (2004) investigated the increased work demands placed on teachers (including leadership and collaborative roles in curriculum development and assessment systems) and the effects of those increased demands.

The author found that organizational support was critical in determining teachers' response to their expanded work role. Teachers in the school demonstrating commitment to integrating additional demands into the regular structure of the school (South High School) reported being much more engaged and committed to their jobs than those teachers whose additional work demands were simply piled onto their existing job requirements without an underlying change in school structure (the East High School teachers). The East High School teachers were therefore only able to satisfy the requirements of their expanded work role by extending their workday, working on average a full 3 hours more each day than their counterparts at South High School. Seven of the 12 East High School teachers interviewed expressly reported experiencing WLC; all of these 7 teachers identified the long hours spent in their work roles as causing strain in their non-work relationships, loss of sleep and lost recreational opportunities. Notwithstanding a lack of financial incentives for these additional work hours, the East High School teachers continued to strive to maintain their expanded work roles. Based on the interview data, Bartlett identified three possible related motivations

behind this: teachers came to equate this expanded work role with good teaching practice; teachers felt a moral obligation with respect to teaching; and teachers wanted to live up to their own internal standards as well as those set by their colleagues. Given the absence of monetary compensation for much of the work done by teachers and the moral motivations for overwork identified in this study, Bartlett concluded that teaching (and other types of care work such as social work) should be examined using an alternative framework from that which has been applied in the overwork literature to date.

Ballet and Kelchtermans (2009) used a multiple case studies design to examine four elementary schools in Belgium. The authors sought to refine the concept of “intensification” (Apple, 1986), the pressure felt by teachers due to increasing demands of policy-makers and societal expectations which are becoming more economically driven and result in greater emphasis being placed on efficiency, heightened scrutiny and accountability for teachers and less involvement in decision-making by teachers themselves.

One of the themes identified by the authors was the pressure placed on teachers as a result of external calls for change (for example, by policy-makers, school boards and parent groups). Teachers found these calls for change undermined their self-confidence and forced them to prove their competence. Another theme was the strong motivation to be a good teacher: teachers found calls for change compelling precisely because it was important to them to be seen to be fulfilling the requirements of their profession. However, because policy decisions and other calls for change may not take into account the practical realities of day-to-day teaching, teachers often incorporated the new policies while preserving their own tried-and-true systems as a way of regaining control over their working conditions. This strategy had the effect of increasing their own workload and making it difficult to find a balance between work and

family life.

### **Quantitative Studies Examining Lawyer WLC Factors**

McGraw and Heidtman's (2009) descriptive field study of work-life conflict in Australian law firms examined WLC specifically in the legal profession. The goal of this study was to examine the role of top management support, number of work-life balance options and personal support in the uptake of WLB options by lawyers in law firms in New South Wales. The researchers found no correlation between number of WLB options and uptake of WLB options or between personal support and uptake of WLB options. However, a significant correlation was found between top management support and employee uptake of WLB options.

A number of studies conducted by Wallace and colleagues examined the WLC factors particular to lawyers. Wallace (1997) surveyed 283 participants in Alberta law firms with a focus on the number of hours worked by law firm lawyers and "work spillover," the extent to which workers feel that work invades their non-work life. The author found little overlap in the factors related to hours worked and work spillover, with the only common factor being work overload – that is, feeling overwhelmed by time pressures and deadlines, excessive work demands and information overload. Work commitment and domestic factors (such as having preschool-aged children) had the strongest correlation with hours worked, while number of hours worked, work motivators (promotional opportunities and social value of work), and work pressures (work overload and the profit-driven nature of law firms) were the factors most relevant to the issue of work spillover. Domestic factors appeared to have the least bearing on work spillover.

Much of the previous research has focused on WLC experienced by women while

ignoring the experience of men. Wallace (1999) conducted a survey of lawyers in Alberta (using the same data set from her 1997 study discussed above), to examine the gender differences in WLC experienced by male and female married lawyers. The survey completed by participants in this study measured the relationship between a number of work-related and domestic factors and two types of WLC: time-based conflict (the extent to which time pressures associated with work infringe on time associated with non-work roles) and strain-based conflict (the extent to which the individual is preoccupied with the work role while trying to complete tasks required by non-work roles). The work-related factors measured included: work involvement (including hours worked per week and work motivation, which refers to the importance placed on work by the lawyer generally); work role stressors (work overload and profit-driven focus in the legal profession); and work context (whether the lawyer worked in a law firm setting or elsewhere). The domestic factors included marital status, partner's work situation, breadwinner status and presence of preschool-aged children.

Notwithstanding this study's focus on a single occupation, men and women reported different levels of those work-related variables believed to contribute to WLC. That is, men worked longer hours than women (averaging 50.04 hours per week as compared to the 45.60 hours averaged by women, who nevertheless also exceeded the 40-hour full-time standard work-week). Men also felt more pressure to generate profits. Nevertheless, women experienced greater work overload. Contrary to the author's hypothesis, male lawyers felt significantly greater time-based conflict than females after taking the work-related variables into account, suggesting that other factors not measured in this study may be at play. However, for both men and women, work role stressors (work overload and profit focus) were the most significant factors in time-based conflict, while work overload was the most important factor with respect

to strain-based conflict, particularly for women. For both types of conflict and both genders, subjective perceptions that workload is excessive appears to be more important than the actual hours worked. The control variables related to family status did not support traditional views of gender differences in WLC, perhaps (as suggested by the author) because female lawyers can generally afford full-time childcare and other domestic services.

Joudrey and Wallace (2009) examined the effectiveness of leisure as a coping strategy in minimizing non-clinical depression and buffering the negative effects of extreme job demands in a sample of 887 Alberta lawyers. This survey measured the relationship between different types of leisure activities (active, passive and social leisure and taking a vacation) and non-clinical depression. The researchers found that passive leisure was not related to depression, whereas active and social leisure and taking a vacation were all significantly negatively related to depression. Of the job demand factors tested, work spillover was the strongest predictor of depression; profit orientation and incivility among lawyers were also significant predictors of depression. Work hours, work overload and social support from co-workers were not significantly related to depression.

Using the same survey data used in connection with Joudrey and Wallace's (2009) study examining leisure as a coping strategy for lawyers, Wallace and Young (2010) investigated the intersection of paid work, unpaid work and participation in leisure activities by male and female lawyers. This study found that men spent more time in paid work and participated in significantly more leisure activities than women, while women spent more time on domestic tasks. Paid weekend work was the only variable negatively related to men's participation in leisure activities; women's participation in active leisure was unrelated to paid work, but there was a strong negative correlation between passive or social leisure and hours spent doing paid

work. Interestingly, while the time women devoted to housework was unrelated to all three types of leisure activities, the amount of time men spent in domestic activities was positively related to passive and social leisure and unrelated to active leisure. This suggests that the time men spend in domestic tasks increases rather than restricts their ability to engage in leisure activities. The authors suggest that men may be rewarded for engaging in traditionally female tasks, thus “earning” additional leisure time when contributing to housework and childcare.

### **Critique of Methodology in Work-Life Balance Research**

A meta-analysis of the research methods used in work-family research summarizes some of the methodological weaknesses in this area of inquiry. Casper, Eby, Bordeaux, Lockwood and Lambert (2007) examined research methods used in 225 work-family studies between 1980 and 2003. The authors found that many studies omitted relevant information from sample characteristics, such as marital status, parental status, family configuration, hours worked and occupation. As such, it is difficult to evaluate the generalizability of the results. Where demographic characteristics were reported, samples were homogenous – there is little data about employees from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and non-traditional families. Most studies were cross-sectional, correlational and conducted in field settings; only 2% used experimental designs and only 6% used quasi-experimental designs, thus providing little information about causal relationships or how work-family issues evolve over time. Qualitative methods were used in only 13% of the studies analyzed; given that work-family research is often criticized for having weak theoretical underpinnings, the authors concluded that more use of qualitative designs is warranted.

The methodological issues identified in Casper et al.’s (2007) meta-analysis are borne



out in the literature reviewed above. Some additional limitations in the literature are discussed below.

**Questionable cause.** Several of the quantitative studies reviewed inferred causation notwithstanding that they were descriptive field studies using cross-sectional survey data. For example, one of the conclusions reached in Allan et al.'s (2007) descriptive field study of Australian employees was that employee control over workload significantly reduces work-life conflict; McCrea et al. (2011) concluded that participative management reduces WLC in the public sector; and Joudrey and Wallace (2009) concluded that control over the number of hours worked reduces depression, thus inappropriately inferring a causal relationship based on correlational data.

Questionable cause and credibility of the findings may also be an issue with Bartlett's (2004) qualitative teacher study. The author noted that East High School had a teacher turnover rate of 50%, while the turnover rate at South High School was only 15%; all but 2 of the South High School teachers had more than 5 years of teaching experience, while at East High School, only 2 teachers had 5 or more years of teaching experience. The author was quick to clarify that she was not drawing a causal link between long work hours and teacher turnover, but she did suggest that there was likely a relationship between work hours, organizational support, seniority patterns and turnover. It is worth noting that there may be additional factors that characterize the differences in work patterns between the two schools. For example, the more junior teachers at East High School may in part be working longer hours because they are still in the process of learning good teaching practices. Alternatively, the East High School teachers may have younger children (and therefore greater childcare responsibilities) than their South

High School counterparts which may contribute to their greater experience of WLC.

**Selective and made-up observation.** In McGraw and Heidtman's (2009) survey regarding WLC issues faced by Australian law firm lawyers, the respondents were primarily human resource managers with a vested interest in confirming that lawyers in their firms have high WLB and, since the respondents were not lawyers themselves, they likely were not in a position to know the personal supports available to lawyers.

**Selection bias and interactive effects of selection bias.** While each of the quantitative teacher studies reviewed above had a survey response rate over 50%, almost all of the non-teacher quantitative studies discussed above had much lower response rates; most had a response rate of around 30%, while in McCrea et al.'s (2011) study of Queensland Public Sector Union employees, the response rate was less than 20%. Particularly in this area of research, these lower response rates could have implications for the accuracy of the findings, since failing to get responses from those who are too busy to respond (or getting data primarily from those participants who are particularly disgruntled) will skew the data to under- or overestimate (respectively) the WLC issues faced by the respondents.

In addition to this general selection issue, several of the studies reviewed contained specific selection concerns. For example, Allan et al. (2007) surveyed employees from a broad range of industries, but participants were nevertheless mostly white-collar workers from large organizations. As well, the percentage of females in McCrea et al.'s (2011) survey sample was higher than that in the union population generally. Research in this area suggests that women, in particular, struggle with WLC, so the disproportionately high number of female respondents

may have inflated the results regarding WLC as compared to the union population as a whole. ten Brummelhuis and van der Lippe (2010) noted that the generalizability of the results of their survey of Dutch employees was limited since Dutch workers spend less time in paid work and household tasks than their counterparts in other European countries or North America, as well as enjoying particularly generous maternity leave policies.

The primary limitation of Grant-Vallone and Ensher's (2011) qualitative study relates to the use of a small, homogenous sample: the vast majority of participants were white, all were heterosexual and middle-class and all had a partner who worked full-time. This selective observation of highly privileged women calls into question the credibility of the study since the researchers chose a sample of women who may be in the best position to balance work and family demands. The small and relatively homogenous sample in this study, characteristic of qualitative studies generally, also calls into question the transferability of these findings to women in different geographical locations, with different ethnic backgrounds, work situations and household structures.

A similar limitation can be found in the two qualitative teacher studies discussed above. Bartlett's (2004) study used a small, homogenous research sample: participants were the English teachers in one high school and the Humanities teachers at a second high school in California. As such, the transferability of the findings may be limited. Similarly, Ballet and Kelchtermann's (2009) study was conducted in Belgium, using schools chosen through purposive sampling in an effort to heighten potential differences rather than aiming to achieve representativeness. In addition, on average only 4 teachers were interviewed at each school. The transferability of the findings of this study may therefore be limited.

Selection bias and the interactive effects of selection bias are also the main limitations of

the studies conducted by Cinamon and her colleagues. Each study discussed above was limited to married Israeli teachers, and two of the three studies were also limited to female teachers. The generalizability of the results of these studies may also be limited due to the specific educational requirements in Israel: most students begin studying for matriculation exams in the tenth grade and much of school business after that point is geared to ensuring high success rates for both students and schools. As such, the applicability of these findings to non-Israeli teachers, male teachers, teachers with non-traditional family structures and those without children is unclear. Moon and Roh (2010) similarly acknowledged the limited generalizability of their results to countries other than South Korea which may have different cultures, organizational structures and educational and family-friendly policies.

**Construct validity.** ten Brummelhuis and van der Lippe (2010) approached the WLC issue from the perspective of the organization, with the relevant measure being work performance as opposed to a measure that might be more meaningful to the employee's quality of life, such as the ability to enjoy leisure activities. Similarly, helping behaviour as a measure of the effectiveness of WLB supports is questionable. A construct validity issue can also be found in McGraw and Heidtman (2009) with respect to their measure of take-up of WLB options, since the take-up of WLB options is only a proxy for employee perceptions of WLB, not a direct measure of WLB.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

While each of the studies reviewed above advances our understanding of work-life conflict (WLC) by either defining WLC factors or the relationships between those factors and WLC, a number of avenues of inquiry remain open for exploration.

One area that remains open for future research is the use of qualitative research methods, particularly in studies of Canadian participants. While several quantitative studies have explored the WLC issues unique to a Canadian law firm setting, qualitative research methods do not yet appear to have been employed to investigate lawyer WLC factors; the use of qualitative research methods would allow us to explore in-depth the particular issues faced by employees in the high-demand setting of a Canadian law firm. Similarly, Cinamon and Rich (2010) suggest that qualitative research methods should be used in order to gain a better understanding of teacher WLC factors. While qualitative studies in the school setting have been conducted with samples in the United States and Belgium, qualitative research in the Canadian school system may uncover teacher WLC factors unique to the Canadian setting.

Second, all of the studies reviewed either conflated data from multiple professions or explored legal professionals or teachers in isolation. As noted by Wallace and Young (2010), future studies should test the generalizability of findings regarding lawyers to workers in other fields. A comparative analysis would be helpful in determining whether the factors related to WLC experienced by lawyers are career-specific or universal in nature. Similarly, comparing the experiences of teachers to those of workers in another demanding profession would allow us to better understand the unique issues faced by individuals in the teaching profession.

In an effort to address some of these gaps in the research identified by previous studies in this area, this study employed a qualitative research design to compare a sample of lawyers working at a large urban Ontario law firm to a sample of urban Ontario schoolteachers with respect to the factors they believe are responsible for the WLC they experience. As demonstrated by the literature discussed above, teachers and lawyers are appropriate comparison groups in light of similarly high burnout and turnover rates notwithstanding that they are subject to very different job demands.

### **Phenomenological Research Designs**

The goal of this study was to determine relevant factors responsible for WLC for law firm lawyers and teachers and to explore whether this experience is profession-specific or generalizable to other professions. A phenomenological design was employed. A phenomenological design is appropriate when the goal of the study is to reduce the personal experiences of a phenomenon as described by participants and gathered through in-depth exploration of that phenomenon to the universal essence of that phenomenon (Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark & Morales, 2007).

### **Participants**

Four lawyers and four teachers working in large urban Ontario settings participated in this study. Each group consisted of two women and two men, all of whom were mid-career (defined for purposes of this study as having five or more years of experience in the profession). Lawyer participants were recruited from a large, international business law firm headquartered in Toronto. Three of the teacher participants were recruited from the author's

personal contacts in Toronto; one of the teacher participants recruited the fourth teacher participant.

All participants received a letter of information regarding the purpose, risks and benefits of the study (Appendix A) and signed a form evidencing their informed consent to participate in the study (Appendix B).

### **Demographics**

The teacher participants in this study included two women and two men ranging in age from 33 to 45 years of age. Two of the teacher participants were married, one was divorced and one was single; two of the teacher participants (one of the married teachers and the divorced teacher) had children. Both married teacher participants described their partner as the breadwinner in the family (that is, the person bringing in the largest income).

The lawyer participants in this study included two women and two men ranging in age from 34 to 44 years of age. Three of the four lawyer participants were married with at least one child, while the fourth was cohabitating with his partner and childless. Three of the four lawyer participants described themselves as the breadwinner in their homes.

See Appendix C for the form of demographic questionnaire completed by all participants prior to their interviews. See Table 1 below for a summary of participant demographics.

Table 1

*Participant Demographics*

Participants	Gender	Age (Years)	Marital Status	Family Status	Childcare Arrangements	Breadwinner Status
<b>Teacher Participants</b>						
TM-1	M	39	Married	No children	N/A	No
TM-2	M	35	Married	1 child (4 months)	Partner on maternity leave	No
TF-1	F	33	Single	No children	N/A	Yes
TF-2	F	45	Divorced	2 children (17 and 14)	Children in school full-time	Yes
<b>Lawyer Participants</b>						
LM-1	M	44	Cohabiting	No children	N/A	Yes
LM-2	M	41	Married	2 children (6 and 5)	Full-time nanny	No
LF-1	F	34	Married	2 children (2 years and 3 weeks)	Participant on maternity leave	Yes
LF-2	F	34	Married	1 child (4 months)	Participant on maternity leave	Yes

**Procedure**

The data for this study was collected by way of semi-structured individual interviews consisting of approximately 35 open-ended questions, including questions regarding work load, pace of work, availability of WLB arrangements, meaningfulness of work and coping strategies. See Appendix D for a complete list of the interview questions. Follow-up questions were asked where appropriate. These interviews were recorded and transcribed in order to produce a complete and accurate record of the participants' responses.



## **Interview Content Analysis**

In accordance with the phenomenological approach to qualitative research outlined by Creswell (2007), all transcripts were first read through in their entirety to provide an overall picture of the data. Next, “meaning units” (that is, direct quotes of the participants) were grouped with related meaning units and assigned descriptive “meaning codes,” which were in turn used to generate descriptions. These descriptions were then organized into themes for each of the two groups. For example, within the lawyer theme of “Work culture and client demands,” the meaning code “Unpredictability/perceived control” comprised direct responses to questions such as, “How predictable is your work schedule?” and quotes including words and phrases such as “impossible to ever control” and “lack of predictability.” See Appendix E for a more detailed description of the coding methodology used to develop lawyer and teacher meaning codes and themes.

## **Trustworthiness**

The role of the researcher and steps taken to enhance the trustworthiness of the results of this study are discussed below.

**Clarification of the role of the researcher.** As the sole collector and analyst of the data, it is important to set out some of the personal experiences that have shaped my perceptions of WLC. I am licensed as a lawyer in the province of Ontario and practiced law at a large, international business law firm (first in New York City and then in Toronto, Ontario) for nine years prior to leaving the practice of law to pursue my interest in the field of Counselling Psychology. The primary reason for my departure from the practice of law

was the very high WLC I experienced working in a large business law firm. This professional background is the source of my interest in the area of WLC, and allowed me to bring to this study an intimate understanding of law firm culture and many of the challenges faced by lawyers in that setting. My own experiences with WLC in the legal field thus shaped the types of questions I asked and the themes I identified.

**Reflective journal.** The formulation of hypotheses prior to data collection is not part of the phenomenological research design (Creswell et al., 2007). However, in light of my personal background as a law firm lawyer, I memorialized in a reflective journal the expectations I had with respect to the data in order to remain mindful of my own beliefs and biases during the data collection and analysis process. Examples of my expectations regarding the findings included the following: that the teachers would report high WLB expectations when entering the profession and state that they chose to enter the teaching field in large part for lifestyle considerations, while the lawyers would report having lower expectations for WLB when entering the profession and state that they chose law largely for reasons related to prestige and salary; that the lawyers would report working significantly longer hours, have a heavier workload and perceive greater spillover than their teacher counterparts; and that the biggest challenges to WLB reported by the lawyers would relate to client demands and billable hours targets, while for the teachers the biggest WLB challenges would be bureaucracy-related frustration and dealing with student and parent issues.

**Member checks.** Following the analysis of the data and the identification of themes, member checks were conducted with each of the participants in order to confirm that these

themes accurately reflected participants' own experience of WLC. Each participant was provided with a list of themes and the meaning codes under each theme for their group (see Appendix F for the lists provided to participants) and asked to confirm that the themes and meaning codes (and the way in which they were grouped together) resonated with their own experience of WLC. Each of the eight participants confirmed that the list of themes and the meaning codes supporting those themes accurately reflected the factors they believed were relevant to their own experience of WLC.

**Inter-rater reliability.** A subset of the data was re-coded by an impartial coder in order to test coding consistency. Three of the 72 participant quotes coded by the impartial coder were assigned different themes, for an inter-rater reliability value of 95.8%.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors responsible for WLC experienced by mid-career teachers and law firm lawyers. Specifically, this study aimed to determine whether the factors responsible for WLC identified in the literature are applicable to teachers and law firm lawyers and/or whether professionals in these careers experience WLC factors that are unique to their profession.

### **Teacher Themes**

Eight themes were identified for teacher participants. The eight teacher themes were: (1) Amount, pace and predictability of work; (2) Self-imposed standards and emotional investment; (3) Meaningfulness of work; (4) Collective agreement and job security; (5) Work culture and community expectations; (6) Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements; (7) Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies; and (8) Teacher perceptions of WLB: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions.

Table 2 sets out the frequency with which each teacher theme was endorsed by the teacher participants. Each of these themes is discussed in greater detail below, including the meaning codes identified for each theme along with participant quotes reflecting each meaning code. The methodology used for assigning meaning codes to participant narratives is set out in Appendix E.

Table 2

*Teacher Participant Summary Table*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Theme 1: Amount, pace and predictability of work</b>	<b>Theme 2: Self imposed standards / emotional investment</b>	<b>Theme 3: Meaningfulness</b>	<b>Theme 4: Collective agreement / job security</b>	<b>Theme 5: Work culture / community expectations</b>	<b>Theme 6: WLB arrangements</b>	<b>Theme 7: Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies</b>	<b>Theme 8: Expectations of WLB</b>	<b>Total # of themes endorsed</b>
TM-1	19	3	6	5	6	7	9	4	8
TM-2	15	15	8	3	18	7	11	5	8
TF-1	20	16	6	1	8	6	10	4	8
TF-2	18	24	11	5	16	6	15	8	8
<b>Total # of participants endorsing each theme</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	

*Note.* Each theme was counted only once per passage of continuous text (ignoring reflections and encouragers from the interviewer) even if that theme arose multiple times in that passage.

**Teacher theme 1: Amount, pace and predictability of work.** This theme focused on the relationship between WLC and concrete job demands, including the number of hours actually worked by participants, the amount of work participants were required to complete, the time within which they were required to complete it and any changes experienced in the amount or pace of work over the course of their careers. Also included under this theme were teacher perceptions of control over various aspects of their work (e.g., when and where work may be completed), the predictability of the work and the flexibility of their work schedules. Finally, this theme encompassed teacher perceptions of the extent to which they worked or had thoughts of work in the evenings, on weekends or otherwise during participants' non-work roles.

Six meaning codes were identified within the theme of amount, pace and predictability of work: (1) Hours worked; (2) Workload; (3) Work pace/intensity; (4) Expansion of work roles; (5) Perceived control/predictability/flexibility; and (6) Spillover. Participant quotes reflecting each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Hours worked.*** Three of the participants stated that they worked around 45 hours per week on average. For example:

*“Gosh, I never really counted it, but I guess it’s, you know, if I count from the time I get in at 7:15 and I finish just around 2:30 the bell rings, so that’s seven and a half hours let’s say, plus most times I’m doing something after school, whether it’s cross country in the fall, soccer in the spring, or something else, or just staying behind, so let’s give it another hour and a half, so then nine hours a day, 45 hours a week, plus anything I do at home...so that’s another maybe two or three hours a week. So, you know, 50 hours would be a pretty long week.”*

The fourth participant reported working around 60 hours each week:

*“Go in at 8:00, work until 4:00, and then I do a couple hours at night, so I have 10 a day and then Sundays I work a lot, so I’d say 60-ish with the marking and everything.”*

**Meaning code 2: Workload.** There were some discrepancies in participants'

perceptions of the heaviness of their workload. Two of the four teachers found the work to be manageable, subject to specific and predictable busy periods. For example:

*"I wouldn't say it's [the workload] too heavy. I mean certainly there are times when it's heavier than others – around report card time, just when tests happen to pile up there's lots of marking to get through in a particular week, but as far as prepping for classes and so on, that gets easier as you go further in the profession because you've taught all the courses before, have material, they're prepared. Every once in a while to do a new course ... or a course that I haven't done for a couple of years and then I have to refresh. But generally the in-class stuff is not, you know, is not difficult. A lot of it is just standing up at the front and talking about a subject I'm very knowledgeable about and then helping students do questions and then, you know, a lot of that is repetitive; the same problems come up again and again, and it's - more than anything it just requires patience [laughing] because you're having to say the same thing over and over."*

The other two participants found their workload to be very heavy. For example:

*"Yes, I feel like I have a heavy ... It's the kind of job where it depends, right?... Like I think if you're a good teacher you work harder and some teachers don't, you know, put in as much time, but it's a heavy workload, like there's job stuff at work, and then you come home and you have marking, you have, you know, other stuff to do, and even on prep, like preps you get your prep time, most people do work, but often I would, you know, I'll go talk to kids or whatever, kids having trouble, whatever....So it's a big workload I think."*

**Meaning code 3: Work pace/intensity.** Three of the four participants found their work

to be very fast-paced. For example:

*"It is extremely fast-paced...Extremely, and really kind of non-stop, like I would say. It's – I don't even have time for myself during the day, like it's 100% you're on and you are focused on your students."*

The fourth participant did not find the pace of his work to be too fast:

*"I think the pace is not difficult, it's not strenuous or stressful, excepting with certain times. There's certainly a regularity to it that, you know, doesn't occur in many other professions I imagine, you know, there are bells that go off during the day that tell you, 'Now you need to be in this place; now you need to be in this place,' and really there isn't an option, because you know we're the ones as teachers who are the responsible parties."*

**Meaning code 4: Expansion of work roles.** Three of the four participants felt that there had been increases in the amount and/or pace of work since they began their careers. For example:

*“I think the pace has increased and the workload has increased. I think more and more things are getting downloaded onto teachers to take care of just in general, like in society, but then also with the Board, if you will. So, just kind of the idea of really fulfilling this really tight curriculum, you know, in a second language, it’s a lot, and then also kind of things like, for example PDA – that’s daily physical activity – in order to combat childhood obesity, kind of one more thing, right, that maybe parents aren’t doing, so it’s up to schools to kind of do, and then just, you know, the idea of like teaching social skills and that sort of thing.”*

*“What can I say, like I think that school has changed so much since even I went to school in elementary school; it’s - I think teachers are expected to do so much more in terms of teaching, you know, the whole child, you know, and really developing them into functional members of society and all of that is, so it’s not just going through a textbook and everyone reading the same thing, it’s all about differentiating instruction. Anyway, all of this stuff and just so many different aspects, and academics are such a small part of what we do. I guess what I’m saying is I don’t know, like it just seems like the structure of school hasn’t changed much in and of itself, like you’re still one person with 20 others, but the workload has increased so much, so if that could somehow give, like if there could be some sort of shift in that way, like smaller classes or two adults with a class or anything to kind of alleviate this full responsibility and full liability for everything I think that would help a lot to kind of just have a bit more equilibrium or...”*

The fourth participant felt that there had been only small changes to the amount or type of work required of him since he began his career:

*“There are small changes, you know, when our contracts change, certain things, certain small – and responsibilities and such change. Like we have supervision responsibilities at lunchtime, for example, once or twice a week, and occasionally we have to cover another teacher’s class because they’re, you know, either sick or out with a group, a team, or a class or something on a fieldtrip, and then we have to cover another class for half a period. Those are called ‘on calls’ or ‘on call during a prep period,’ and those are kind of dreaded by most teachers. It takes you away from the free time that you have to, you know, do your own work, and the amount of those sort of changes when the contract changes. So, for example, currently we have less of those than we used to have, so that’s changed a little bit, but generally those responsibilities are always there or have always been there.”*



**Meaning code 5: Perceived control/predictability/flexibility.** All four participants felt that there was a great deal of predictability in terms of the regularity of their overall schedule:

*“It’s predictable, very predictable, like we have a monthly calendar that comes out that says when everything is, like in terms of assemblies, and presentations, and yada, yada, yada, so it’s very easy to set up like two weeks in a row you know exactly what you’re doing.”*

All four participants also noted the highly regimented nature of the environment:

*“...so your day is broken up into such small chunks that outside of that it seems crazy, like if I talk about having a prep period it’s really just 40 minutes, but in an office job like that’s half an hour, like it’s nothing, right, but you kind of swallow that and whatever, but so I don’t have time to go to the washroom sometimes, like I have to... You know we have meetings during lunch hour, which is you know, 55 minutes exactly, and then the bell rings...It is, it is very, very regimented; highly, highly structured, so it’s just kind of nonstop and it’s hyper-stimulating too also, like because just being one adult with all of these kids, and so there’s, you know, your classroom time, and then you know, duties, and meetings, and clubs, and like that sort of thing, so there’s just like different aspects to kind of, the day, but highly structured.”*

Two of the four teachers stated that within the highly structured, predictable schedule was a great deal of unpredictability:

*“Well, I know I have to be there from 8:15 to 3:15. That’s about as predictable as it gets. So, I can come in, we have these preps that we’re supposed to get on a five-day period, right, so like my third day gets an hour prep at 10:00, my fourth day whatever, like those are there. But I can come in on day three and be told that there’s no coverage for my prep teacher. Say, I have music, my kids go to music, music teacher is sick and nobody has picked up her job, sorry. You teach that hour and it’s like ah, I was going to do all my paperwork then or I was going to do...So, like I am planning to buy my lunch that day, because I had nothing in the fridge, and suddenly there’s a parent that comes to see me at lunch and it’s like great, so there goes my lunch...”*

All four participants reported feeling that they had little control over their time during classroom hours but all four also felt that they had a great deal of latitude regarding when and where they could complete all non-classroom work such as marking and preparation for subsequent classes. For example:

*“I mean the day-to-day work I don’t have any freedom, that has to be in the classroom, but as far as the marking goes I do have some freedom and I sort of take advantage of it; I put that off [laughing] often, but you know generally it should be done - or I feel*

*quite badly if it takes any longer than a week. Some teachers are more, you know, sort of do it faster than others, but generally everyone takes a number of days to do it."*

**Meaning code 6: Spillover.** All four participants reported doing several hours of work each week during the evenings and on weekends, with some variation in the regularity and length of this evening and weekend work. For example:

*"I would say, yeah I would say 2, 3 hours a night, and then Sunday usually for like five hours or so."*

Two of the four participants also spent a significant amount of their non-work time thinking about work:

*"Quite a bit of my time, and it's because you think about what you're going to do, you also think about things that happened at school, the emotions of the kids, you know, what do I need to do to help this kid. So, I would say in terms of time, I'm better this year, but before I used to think about it all the time, like even on a Saturday I'm not doing work, but I'm sitting there at a barbeque thinking about it."*

The third participant felt that she was fairly successful at separating her work and non-work roles:

*"I feel like I tend to actually compartmentalize my life fairly well in terms of ... I often don't think about like lessons, and codes, and that sort of thing; like once I'm done my work at school then I'm done."*

The fourth participant reported thinking about work frequently in his non-work time, but did not generally view this negatively:

*"I sort of, when I, you know, do my own recreational reading I do read things about the job in general, about mathematics, about teaching mathematics, ideas for it, and so on, but those things are not... I don't do those out of responsibility, I do those things because I'm sort of generally interested in it, and then occasionally I will incorporate those things or attempt to incorporate those things into my class, but it's not, you know, I don't feel pressure to do that, so I don't sort of feel that I have to be thinking about work more than I do. As far as sort of, let's say anxieties about work, thinking about work when I'm not there or worrying about work, that's there occasionally. There have been periods where I've had difficult classes or we had sort of a curriculum change a few years ago, and there was a new course, and we didn't have textbooks, and that was sort of a very pressure-filled semester, so I was anxious about that at the time, but I*

*don't think generally I do spend a lot of time thinking or anyway certainly not worrying about it."*

**Teacher theme 2: Self-imposed standards and emotional investment.** The theme of self-imposed standards and emotional investment focused on the relationship between WLC and implicit and/or internally imposed job demands and pressures. Four meaning codes were identified within the theme of self-imposed standards and emotional investment: (1) Emotional investment in student needs; (2) Self-imposed expectations/standards/pressures; (3) Responsibility/accountability; and (4) Autonomy. Examples of participant statements related to each of these meaning codes are provided below.

***Meaning code 1: Emotional investment in student needs.*** Three of the four participants made comments suggesting a heavy emotional investment in the needs of their students. For example:

*"Yeah, that's my strategy, but in another way I don't compartmentalize that well in terms of ... I feel like being a teacher, especially at this school and working with the population we are, there's just so much to think about, like you're just exposed to the full range of humanity and their choices, and you know different families, and relationships, and what's happening, and whatever. So, there are so many sad situations, just really upsetting situations that it's really hard not to think about it, like after work and stuff, and you just think of these little kids, you know, going home to like whatever is happening. ...So, that's hard to like not think about."*

***Meaning code 2: Self-imposed expectations/standards pressure.*** All four participants indicated holding themselves to high standards in their work (and in two cases, non-work) roles. For example:

*"I would say to that that you should never have lesson plans. I don't even keep my lesson plans from the year before. ...I change them, yeah. You have new students in front of you all the time, every year is a new year, and I couldn't use some... I mean I could; I could teach the same thing over and over again, but I don't think I would*

*reach my students, I don't think that would be beneficial to them, but that's me. ...You know and other teachers do exactly that and maybe that's how they do it....I think they're not doing their job to be honest, but yeah there's that or they use their prep time, they use their prep time to do that work, they don't go and find out what's going on in the rest of the school. You know teachers who close their doors and teach their class and that's all they do, they can do that, they can work 8:15 to 3:15 and pull it off."*

**Meaning code 3: Responsibility/accountability.** All four participants indicated feeling a great deal of responsibility in their roles as teachers. For example:

*"Oh, well I mean I have quite a bit of responsibility, legal responsibility for, you know, children every day..."*

All four participants also felt a sense of accountability to the students, their colleagues, the school and parents regarding their work:

*"It's really scary and I think that's why I opened my door, it was like I don't like sometimes the way I am in my class, and I can change that by having the door open; that means anybody that comes through - I have to be, I'm accountable for every minute I spend with those kids, and I should be, and everybody should be, and it is changing, it is definitely changing, because they're realizing it now."*

**Meaning code 4: Autonomy.** Three of the four participants felt that they had a great deal of autonomy in their work. For example:

*"In some ways none; in some ways a lot. Certainly scheduling and all of that is very rigid, as we've spoken about ad nauseum [laughing], but then yeah in terms of delivery of curricular expectations and, you know, what the focus is, and the atmosphere in the classroom, and all of those kind of intangible things, well maybe tangible, I don't know, but that's all up to me, so I can have a lot of autonomy, and certainly in this role as resource teacher it's a new role in our school, so I've really kind of been inventing it and you know there's really no support in French immersion for kids struggling, so it's really, yeah a new program, so I've really kind of had a lot of autonomy to just like develop that, and experiment, and kind of you know, yeah, see what works, see what doesn't, change it, yeah, I set my own schedule, that sort of thing, yeah."*

The fourth teacher felt somewhat constrained by curriculum requirements:

*"[A]s far as autonomy, I mean certainly to a large extent what goes on in the classroom is entirely at my discretion, but you know there are curriculum expectations*

*certainly in my subject more than other subjects. I mean you know a phys-ed class, as long as the teacher I believe keeps them occupied with certain games they're never assessed externally on that. For example, for grade nine classes there's a province-wide assessment that's written every year by grade nine students, so you know we are obligated to prepare the students for that. For other years we know that they will be in someone else's classroom the next year, one of our colleagues, and there will be an expectation that they have skills and knowledge that they've acquired from us, so we can't really, you know we do have certain things that we have to teach and within our department we kind of take that very seriously. We realize that we all rely on each other to prepare the students for the next year. I think that math teachers or math types let's say [laughing], are quite fastidious about those things more so than other departments from, you know, just in speaking to people. So, there isn't that much autonomy, I mean how the material's presented you can certainly come up with novel ways if you want, but there are tried and true methods that generally we adhere to."*

**Teacher theme 3: Meaningfulness of work.** The third theme identified in respect of the teacher participants related to the meaningfulness of the work to these participants. This theme included four meaning codes: (1) Reasons for entering teaching profession; (2) Importance of career; (3) Sources of job satisfaction/meaning; and (4) Intentions for the future. Participant quotes reflecting each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Reasons for entering the teaching profession.*** Each of the participants cited different paths to, or reasons for entering, the teaching profession. Only one of the four participants reported a long-standing desire to become a teacher. Two of the participants reported liking the idea of working with children; one of these participants came to be interested in teaching as a career after working as a teacher overseas, while the other was interested in science but decided to go to teachers' college because of the short time investment required. The fourth participant came to teaching after becoming dissatisfied with his career in computer programming and thought teaching would be a way for him to apply his interest in math in a more satisfying context.

*“And I’ve always wanted to be a teacher; I’ve always been a teacher, but a formal teacher with an Ed. degree meant I could make my living.”*

*“Yeah, it was kind of more that I kind of went to Japan to have this experience and, kind of, there when I was tutoring people and just working with different, you know, specific goals and seeing the progress and that and I felt like, ‘Oh, I’d like to do this when I get back to Canada,’ and it’s something that interested me, especially working with children. That’s always kind of been a draw, but I’m very happy that I have, yeah.”*

*“I love kids, that’s the one thing, but I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do, to be honest, so I went to teacher’s college, it was only a year, so I didn’t have to invest like four years into a program. And then ended up loving it and that was it. It’s not originally what I wanted to do. I wanted to do something more related to science, like forensic science or....”*

*“I just liked doing the math and would still do it on occasion myself just, you know, for fun. So, when I decided to change over I started tutoring a little bit after work, because you know I thought that would be a good way to see, you know, dip my foot in the water as it were, see if I enjoyed working with students, working with kids, you know, see if it would give me the satisfaction or it would at least give me a promise of satisfaction and in fact it did.”*

**Meaning code 2: Importance of career.** Two of the participants felt that their career was very important to them:

*“I think teaching in general is a huge responsibility and for me in particular, like I said before, it’s something that I’ve always done and now I’m being paid for it. It’s huge, huge.”*

*“I mean I, certainly, my job, my position, who I am professionally, is important to me in terms of my identity now that I’ve sort of found it.”*

The other two participants were somewhat equivocal, stating that their career was currently very important to them but allowing for the possibility of changing or leaving the profession:

*“It’s important. I love it actually, but if I could retire now I would....just to get rid of the stress and anxiety, that’s the only reason really. So, how important is it? I guess not that important if I’m ready to retire. Like I absolutely love it, but if I could retire, I would, and I’d do volunteer work for schools.”*

*“I mean in some ways I would say very [important]. Like I’m very committed to it and you know I really want to succeed and do the best that I can, and when I’m there I’m*

*fully there and for – like, in the short-term anyway I can't imagine doing anything else. In the long term I can imagine doing other things. I would hope to kind of stay in the education profession, but who knows, and I'm certainly open to changing my career or just modifying it, like I definitely don't... I guess I have the idea I do not want to be like a 50-year old woman still teaching in a classroom, you know? This energy output that's expected is just - it would not be manageable, so I think about that and I think about kind of backwards planning, like so what can I put in place now or what can I do to kind of, yeah change it up and also just keep challenging and stuff, so I would say my career is very important. That said, I don't know, I struggle sometimes with the idea of like if I had a baby, like would I want to go back to work or would I want to raise them myself or whatever, because you know I work with so many women, mothers and stuff, and I see their struggles and how hard it is to kind of do both, and yeah. So, anyway, so I mean right now it's important, but that doesn't mean it won't change, yeah."*

**Meaning code 3: Sources of job satisfaction/meaning.** All four participants cited

helping students and contributing to their learning as being a primary source of job satisfaction.

*"You know it's the everyday contact with students. In a class of 30 students or so, right now I have about 84 students this semester among my three classes. You know of those 84 students I would say generally I like, you know, 70+ of them. There's only a small number that are for different reasons difficult, and even those students because they're young, you know, 18 years at the most, I don't really dislike them. I know that they are sort of going through different things in their lives, and so on. So generally you know it's a pleasant way to spend the day talking about a subject I enjoy, you know, with kids who are generally favorably disposed, although often bored, but nonetheless not opposed to hearing what I'm saying. I get to help them with things and feel satisfied - take satisfaction from seeing them learn and seeing them - also take satisfaction from being able to do something they couldn't do before. This semester I have an enhanced class, so students who are sort of identified as, you know, having exceptional learning abilities, that's always a fun class to teach to some extent, because they can pick things up quickly and you can show them things that they really are, you know, sort of - let's say give them a sense of wonder, which other students who are perhaps less open to learning don't demonstrate, so that always makes things enjoyable day-to-day as well when you show something to a kid and they say 'oh that's neat,' you know that really gives you a sense of satisfaction."*

*"Or the kid this year who said, you know, at the beginning of the year couldn't write anything except that he loves his PlayStation, and his Xbox, and that's all he ever talked about, and by the end of the year was saying things like 'I've changed, I'm very proud of myself, I think I'm a special person because' - and this is all in French – 'I'm a special person because at the beginning I used to get very angry, and now I've*

*changed and I've learned how to control that.' Like oh my god, that's really awesome... We're teaching them how to be people, and how to think, and how to use the information around them."*

*"[M]aking kids happy, I absolutely love that. Making kids feel like they can do whatever they want to do, as cheesy as that sounds, but like they have the power to do things. I think being at this school the thing I really like is they're very smart kids, and they're going to be, like they're going to be the affluent kids in the future, like they're going to be the politicians, the doctors, the lawyers, and I think being at this school - like the other school you're trying to save them, whereas at this school you're trying, you know, you're doing the social justice and trying to teach them how to change and help the other school, like help the other people, right, and that's like helping the other kids I thought I would miss, but this I think is just as powerful in terms of these are the people who are going to make the change in the future. Like I hate to say that, and I don't mean not that the other kids won't, but they're in the position, right, to do it.... The other thing too is I just believe in educating kids, like it's important. You can't do anything now unless you're... Sorry, that's not fair to say, but it's tough to get a job unless you're educated now. Yeah, that's it really."*

*"Yeah, I guess mainly just the fact that it's so people-oriented. I think for me that's a big kind of energy boost - or takeaway.... I can't even like really express it well in words, but it's amazing to work with really young kids and kind of see that energy, and enthusiasm for life, and just like this learning happening, especially in senior kindergarten like they're so young and I've just seen such a development and such a progression in them, so that's been really nice and that's I think the main thing, and that's I would hope why people would get into teaching, because if you don't like kids it's going to be really hard. Yeah, you're not going to have a nice life, like it's so, yeah, you're giving so much. And you get back so much."*

**Meaning code 4: Intentions for the future.** Two of the four teachers were happy with their current situation and had no plans to move away from classroom teaching. For example:

*"I'm not that concerned with any kind of, you know, career progression; I don't mind staying in this particular job for the rest of the time. I don't have ambitions about rising up or anything like that. I may be a head of the department at some point in the future but that's about as far as I plan to go. I certainly don't plan to go into administration or curriculum development or anything like that, I just think would take me away from the part of the job that I really do enjoy, and I don't have any kind of desire for power or wealth [laughing] such as it would be given to you, yeah."*

The other two teachers were open to moving into non-classroom roles. For example:

*"And so I guess my whole thing is to keep kind of learning, and taking courses, and getting certifications and qualifications and stuff so that when an opportunity does*



*arise I'll be ready, and just how I got the resource position at my school was exactly that, like I took Special Education Part 1, and I was offered it, you know, because I asked for it kind of thing. So, yeah I don't want to be a classroom teacher forever; I think that's not really an achievable goal, to be an effective one anyway. So, I do want to do other things within the field of education. You know I could write curriculum or work for the Ministry in some capacity that way or ... I'm not sure that I would want to be administration, but that's also an avenue that's potentially open. I mean you have to do other things to get there, but yeah you know I've done my Master's and I've done different things, so just all kind of as hopefully stepping stones to something."*

**Teacher theme 4: Collective agreement and job security.** A fourth theme that was identified for teacher participants was the role of the collective agreement negotiations that were ongoing at the time of the interviews. Three meaning codes were identified for this theme: (1) Changes to collective agreement; (2) Job security; and (3) Promotional opportunities. Participant quotes reflecting each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Changes to collective agreement.*** All four participants referred to collective agreement negotiations as an issue impacting WLB arrangements. For example:

*"Do you know about the union with the negotiations we're doing? We have 20 sick days a year, then the Ministry of Education is asking for us to reduce it to 6 days a year. We're allowed to bank those days and they're saying we don't want that anymore."*

*"So, they're being negotiated, but it's down to like, you know, PD days not being paid; the number of sick days. They want to do a pay freeze, and they want to do a freeze on the grid. I don't know what will end up happening. So, I'll always have a job, but..."*

***Meaning code 2: Job security.*** All four participants felt secure in their jobs, although each felt there was a possibility that the nature of their job might change in the future. For example:

*"Now, as far as job security, again now is a sort of very timely... That's a timely question because now there is talk of, you know, there's contract renegotiations and I don't think that it would... I can't anticipate that it would somehow cause me to lose*

*my job, but certainly the nature of the job may change; it may become more difficult depending on how these negotiations go, and there's a possibility as I said of some sort of work action, which would be, you know, something I've never been involved in. I don't know how that would go, I don't know how I'd feel about that, so... but you know generally I think my job is very secure."*

*"But job security wise, teachers have a very secure job. The worst that can happen is I could get surplused and I get moved to another school, but in terms of job security I'm fine."*

**Meaning code 3: Promotional opportunities.** All four participants were somewhat aware of the promotional opportunities available to them. However, three participants felt that they were unlikely to take advantage of these opportunities. For example:

*"Yeah, so you know there are possibly promotional opportunities, as I said, to department head, if I pursue them or even beyond that if I were to pursue them I, you know, to administration, those are there, you can take courses to prepare for that, but I don't have any ambitions to do that, but the opportunities are there."*

*"In terms of promotion, like I can take the courses to be an administrator, but I just have no desire to be an administrator."*

One participant felt that the available avenues for promotion were increasingly limited due to collective bargaining issues:

*"Right now I feel like that's a mixed bag, like we're undergoing talks, like negotiation talks, negotiations for our collective agreement, right, and then... So, not to say that, you know, teaching jobs would be surplused, but there's a lot of surpluses of educational assistants, special needs assistants, you know, instructional leaders, coaches... So specifically like for example for instructional leaders or coaches that's always kind of been presented as an avenue of promotion or just variation anyway, and now all of those jobs have been cut and those former coaches are now being put back in the classroom....so I don't know, it's mixed; like I think there are avenues for promotion or opportunity, but then I don't know if there are so much anymore... or maybe there will be, like yeah it's very uncertain and that's also stressful I guess, like just this uncertainty, yeah."*

**Teacher theme 5: Work culture and community expectations.** The fifth theme that emerged for teacher participants was that of work culture and community expectations.

Grouped together under this theme were external pressures and expectations imposed on teachers which contributed to teachers' experience of WLC. Four meaning codes were identified under the fifth theme of work culture and community expectations: (1) Work culture/expectations; (2) Parent expectations/pressure/ involvement; (3) Affluence of community; and (4) Employee morale. Examples of participant statements related to each of these meaning codes are set out below.

**Meaning code 1: Work culture/expectations.** One participant reported that he had a very collegial work environment, particularly compared to the adversarial environments reported at other schools:

*“I think it’s generally quite collegial, I mean I have heard stories. This is the only school I’ve worked at, so I can’t necessarily compare it to other institutions, but I have heard stories that at other schools there’s sort of a much more adversarial relationship between the administration and the staff or between different departments or even within a department to the head of the department. In fact, I’ve heard many stories about the head who was there before I came who really was a quite ambitious person intent on moving up and she was sort of using the department to, you know, run certain ideas or run certain projects that weren’t necessarily for the good of the department or for the good of the students but were making her visible to higher-ups, and that caused a lot of problems. There’s nothing really like that at the school right now and since I’ve been there I haven’t experienced anything like that. I mean certainly you know there are always going to be times where there are different motives between teachers - classroom teachers - and administrators, but you know apart from grumbling and the occasional sort of heated face-to-face, which I haven’t been a part of, but I know my colleagues have been, there’s nothing really that bad. Generally the culture, as I say, is very collegial and people do a lot of - there’s a lot of socializing after school by different groups which helps, you know, which helps people work together.”*

The second participant reported that his workplace was a very positive, happy work environment:

*“Super positive, super happy, hard workers; it’s really a nice place, it’s a good place, kids are happy...”*

One of the elementary school teachers characterized her workplace as very fast-paced and stressful as a result of the many crises that required management from day to day:

*“Yeah, so it’s nonstop; it’s really fast-paced, it’s go, go, go... like I mean not to kind of belabour the point, but it almost seems like in some ways we’re going from crisis to crisis, just kind of these kids in crisis or at risk for whatever kind of huge situations happening, and you know all the resources go to that, and then even if it happens in one classroom, some sort of meltdown or whatever with a kid, it affects everyone because, you know, just like the energy is palpable, and the stress level, and yeah and just - it really, like it’s just all-consuming I guess, like the atmosphere. I kind of forget, like if I... Say I go to work thinking like OK, I need to, for example, call my doctor, you know, make an appointment or call this person or do this, like I will 100% forget to do it during the day because I just have no time to, like, think about my other life.”*

In terms of expectations regarding availability to administrators and colleagues after hours, all four participants reported that they were required to check their email daily but were not generally expected to be in contact with their workplace after school hours. For example:

*“They don’t require for us to give them our cell phone numbers....They do expect us to check-in on email every day. The expectation is that we do that during our school day. Sometimes it’s impossible, so of course those days we should be checking at home.... Blackberries? I’ve never had a call at home from any of the principals. I think I got a call once when I was sick because they didn’t find the plans that I had left or something like that, but that’s legitimate, like I don’t mind. In 8 years, one call home? That’s all right.”*

The participants also reported that expectations regarding time spent in the workplace were driven by union-wide standards, with one participant also noting that failing to adhere to these minimum standards resulted in negative attention from colleagues:

*“Right, well certainly everyone is expected to be there, you know, by 8:00AM. That’s sort of the official union rule; however there are a number of teachers who are notorious for coming in very close to the bell or even after the bell. Everyone is expected to be there, again by the rules, until I think like 10 to 3:00. Class ends at 2:35PM, so another 15 minutes, but a lot of people, certainly people I know - associate with - spend a lot of time, you know, later after that either working or involved with some sports teams or some clubs. So, you know many people, and you know there is a certain expectation of that involvement in the extracurricular. It’s not - there’s no obligation, but people who don’t do it, especially young teachers are encouraged by their colleagues and also by the administration to get more involved, so you know those are outside of working hours responsibilities that everyone is expected to do to some*

*extent. As far as contact, we do all provide contact numbers, but as I said it's pretty rare that those are employed."*

**Meaning code 2: Parent expectations/pressure/involvement.** All four participants felt that they had pressure placed on them due to parents' expectations and involvement. For example:

*"I had somebody sit at parent-teacher interviews and say it's my tax dollars that are paying your salary. Like, and I'm like well and what does that mean exactly? So, I must follow what you tell me to do, like?"*

*"Like I know last year was my first year and I was, I feel like, you know, you're being tested, they're checking you out, but in terms of that it's regardless of if I'd been there for 10 years I think it would be the same. Certain parents, right, just it's not all of them, but it is the kind of school that if you're liked, if you're really liked, I think the pressure is less, right?"*

**Meaning code 3: Affluence of community.** The affluence of the community was a factor noted by all four of the participants as affecting their general work environment and the expectations and requirements placed on them. The participants working in affluent communities felt pressured to meet the high expectations parents had for their children and felt obligated to be available to these parents after hours:

*"Yeah, well it's generally an affluent community, you know, the median salary is among the top for schools. I think it probably is the top one for schools in the region, the Peel Region, and certainly probably in Toronto as well, so the parents have expectations that their students will go to university, that they will do well at school, that they will, you know, sort of move onto prestigious positions later in life, and as a result they expect that their results, marks, as well as performance in other things, whether it's sports or other extracurriculars would be excellent, outstanding. If it isn't, then there's some tendency to blame the teachers or to demand of the teachers that this be improved. You know, certainly there are times when the teachers can do more, but also you know some students are just not, you know in my case they're just not good math students, they're just not good at math, and they can do better but they're never going to be the top of the class, and you know I think maybe that's true for all parents: getting to know who your child is, you know, is part of growing up [laughing] as a parent."*

*“Yeah, it’s a nice place, so I give my cell; if they [the parents] need something, they call.”*

Conversely, the teachers working at the less affluent school dealt with issues such as student hunger and social problems:

*“I do this check-in not every morning, but they love it – ‘so how’s everybody feeling today?’ And you get like crazy things: ‘I’m really hungry; I didn’t have breakfast this morning.’ It’s like ‘OK, go get a snack.’ We have a snack program, luckily, in the school. ‘Have your snack now, but you can’t have it at recess.’ ‘Oh, OK, OK, I know,’ and they will go and grab their snack, which means they are hungry. And really sleepy. I have kids who fall asleep. They’re seven and eight, like that’s hard to deal with day-in and day-out, and then in June you’re like ‘OK, goodbye, you’re gone.’ It’s not easy and every year it’s a new batch, right, but for 10 months...”*

*“And certainly at my first school it was a very different dynamic, very different community – much more settled and kind of well off for lack of a better word, and so there just weren’t as many social problems and I just wasn’t having to deal with that aspect of it so much, whereas this school, and especially with just younger kids there’s just a lot more to deal with in terms of, you know, yeah social skills and social problems really.”*

**Meaning code 4: Employee morale.** The teacher participants felt that employee morale fluctuated depending on a number of factors, including the tone set by administration, time of year and difficult collective agreement negotiations. For example:

*“So, I think employee morale really depends on our principal and just kind of the leadership shown therein, and so it’s been good in a lot of ways. My principal and my vice principal complement each other nicely and they’re a good team, so there’s no kind of stress about them fighting, which there was previously. Anyway, so yeah, so this is the third year that my principal’s been at this school, so that’s nice in terms of continuity and expectations. That said, like her personal style is very, yeah, just go, go, go, and quite hyper...”*

*“Yeah, so I think at different times of the year you get different answers, and for the most part because we are quite a social group in my school, it’s OK. We boost each other up. I tend to remind people of the cycle, so if everybody’s down I say ‘oh, you know what, I heard so and so, and so and so, and so and so feeling the same way, remember last year it seems to be every November,’ you know, that kind of thing, and it helps a little, but when you’re in it it’s hard.”*

*“Yeah, so you know I would say until this year when this information came out about the government’s now decision to sort of take a harder line in the negotiations, until this year things have been very positive; morale is generally very good at our school. As I said, certain groups, certain departments have ongoing grievances, perhaps that’s too strong a word, but you know certain things that they grumble about, but I don’t think generally that leads to any kind of negative work performance or conflict ongoing into personal conflict.”*

**Teacher theme 6: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements.** Theme six, availability and uptake of WLB arrangements, focused on the extent to which arrangements intended to increase WLB were available to teacher participants, supported by management and actually taken up by teachers. This theme comprised the following four meaning codes: (1) Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements; (2) Management support for WLB arrangements; (3) Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements; and (4) WLB support from colleagues. Participant quotes reflecting each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements.*** Participants reported being aware a number of WLB arrangements, including sick days, part-time positions, extended leave and courses to assist teachers attain balance.

*“I mean we have a bank of sick days, so ... and because I think it’s something like 80% of elementary school teachers are women, so it really is understood that, you know, if you are sick, or your child is sick, or your child has an appointment, you know you can take a day off, like that’s an acceptable reason to take a day off, like it’s not held against you or whatever.”*

*“So, there are part-time jobs, which means you... And they’ve been flexible so that... Part-time usually means you work half a day in the week, but they’ve made accommodations so that one of the teachers - our music teacher - worked two full days and then three off, and then I think it flipped and the following week it would be three and two off or something like that. So, that was kind of cool that they did that for her and that had never been done in our school before. ...I think you just have to put it in writing and say that you’re going from full-time to part-time, but there is a limited number of times of years consecutively that you can do that.”*

*“You know there’s certainly the availability – I don’t know about opportunity, but the availability to take leave or extended leave, that’s built right into the contract...There’s also sort of a program called “4.5 for 5” or “4 for 5” where you can declare as a teacher that you intend to take a year off in four years or half a year in four and a half years, and then you work at 80% or 90% of your salary for those five years and it’s stretched out over that time...”*

*“I guess there are courses, like they always offer courses; if they feel you need help, you can take like time management and things like that to help balance the way you work. So, there’s courses available...”*

**Meaning code 2: Management support for WLB arrangements.** One participant felt that there was overt support for WLB arrangements but that there was implicit disapproval for taking advantage of these types of arrangements:

*“But then there is kind of this implicit pressure to come to school and not use our money for supply teachers, because if you’re not there then someone has to be there for you, right, so there’s that whole thing. Like you can’t just not be there, right, there has to be like a supply teacher replacement which costs money out of the school budget. So, there’s that kind of issue I guess, but my principal in particular - she’s very flexible about, you know - she’ll let you leave early if you need to go to an appointment. If you can rearrange your schedule, she’ll let you kind of thing, as opposed to again, taking a sick day, because you can’t just leave for two hours and come back and go on with your work; it’s very presence-oriented, like you have to be there.”*

The other participants felt that the administration in their workplace was generally very supportive of available WLB arrangements. For example:

*“...and again he came back and there were no, you know, sort of there was no thought of any kind of resentment because of doing that. Other people have had personal issues to deal with that have come up, and again there’s a lot of support from their colleagues and from the school.”*

*“I guess, I mean the office is very supportive. They always say, you know, family comes first, so that expectation is not crazy to start...and at this school everybody’s pretty helpful too, like if you’re behind on something, you need help with something, people will help, so...”*



**Meaning code 3: Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements.** Three participants

generally felt that the uptake and feasibility of the WLB arrangements available to them was quite high and was even encouraged by the administration. For example:

*“You know many teachers take maternity leave. We, you know, have on a staff of, I don’t know, 70 or 80 we have at least two or three teachers out at any time on maternity leave, and teachers in for them on what’s called a long term occasional placement teaching their classes, and you know it’s very, I mean not only accepted; it’s actually encouraged because it gives young teachers the opportunity to come in those part-time jobs to cover and sort of get their foot in the door. There’s never any kind of resentment about those teachers being away and then, you know, they’re very much welcomed back when they do come back.”*

*“...and I know of one person who has done it because he, you know, wanted to spend time with his son before the son was yet at school, and he said it was, you know, for him it was very satisfying...”*

The fourth participant stated that, while uptake of WLB options was generally high, teachers might be hesitant to take advantage of WLB arrangements for fear of being judged harshly by their colleagues:

*“Yeah, some people do. I think in this profession, like if you’re doing that sometimes people see it as a flaw, like teachers can be hard on teachers, like ‘oh, he can’t manage his class, he can’t, you know, get through things,’ and I think sometimes people don’t do it because they feel like they’re going to be judged, but a lot of people do take advantage of it. I mean this school they’re pretty solid teachers, so I don’t think a lot of them need to, right?”*

**Meaning code 4: WLB support from colleagues.** Three of the four teacher participants

reported receiving WLB support from their colleagues. For example:

*“You know we do have, as I said, quite a collegial staff, so if someone does need to take - leave work early and doesn’t want to take a half-day off, which is what you’d have to do, then you know other teachers will cover their class. I mean I’ve done that myself, I mean both ways – both covered someone else’s class and taken a little extra time and had someone cover my class, so you know there’s a lot of support that way.”*

*“From colleagues I think we’re all in the same boat, so we kind of understand each other. Other people have other involvements, whether it’s with music groups, other sports teams, or other clubs, they occasionally go on trips, you know, away, and then*

*they have to be covered and so on, and everyone understands it's just part of the routine."*

**Teacher theme 7: Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies.** The seventh theme that emerged was that of teacher personal factors that served to either increase the WLC of teacher participants or allowed them to better cope with WLC. The following four meaning codes were identified under the theme of personal factors: challenges and coping strategies: (1) Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles; (2) Changes in ability to handle workload/pace; (3) WLB support from family; and (4) Coping strategies. Examples of participant statements related to each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles.*** Participants reported engaging in a range of non-work activities, such as sports, reading, socializing and spending time with loved ones. For example:

*"I come home and you know I enjoy sort of certain sports - participating in sports: running, golfing, playing soccer; I enjoy reading various things, socializing with my friends, going out sort of for walks in the park, spending time with my wife, et cetera."*

One participant also noted that time spent outside of work was often spent thinking about or performing work-related tasks. This participant was a new parent and reported that non-work time was increasingly taken up by childcare responsibilities. For example:

*"Thinking about work [laughing], doing work, and I guess I play Frisbee and stuff. ...Play Frisbee, hang out with my kid, that's really it; I have a pretty boring life. Go out for dinners, that's our biggest thing, well not since the kid, but..."*

And later:

*"Just in terms of, like tired, like I didn't get up in the middle of the nights, but I did, like I didn't get up to go to baby, but I would get waken [sic] up, and so sleep wasn't the greatest, and then I'd come home and I was tired, so I got behind on marking a bit. So, it definitely had an impact on getting things done."*

**Meaning code 2: Changes in ability to handle workload/pace.** The teacher

participants reported an increasing ability to handle the amount and pace of their work as they gained work experience. For example:

*“I used to spend a lot more time in the first couple of years; I used to do a lot of prep, I’d stay up late preparing things for the next day or, you know, creating tests or assignments from scratch, but now that I’ve been through those courses multiple times I have that already and then it’s just a case of modifying it or fine-tuning it.”*

*“I think part of it is you get better....So, part of it is you’ve built up resources, you have the resources, you don’t have to reinvent things, and I think just getting quicker at things is part of it, like marking now is not...You’ve seen so much that you know what’s what pretty easily now.”*

**Meaning code 3: WLB support from family.** Two of the participants reported

receiving no support from family:

*“And I’m not really close with my family, so I don’t really have that as like an outlet or whatever.”*

One participant also felt that he received little WLB support from his spouse:

*“Family, they’re not really in the equation because they’re not here, so... But in terms of [my wife], I guess she kind of lets me do my thing, so I don’t really get a ton of support from her other than getting into shit for not having things done.”*

The other three participants felt that they received a great deal of WLB support from their partners or ex-partners:

*“Yeah, I think you know my partner, my wife, is very good about understanding when I have longer days because of coaching commitments or if I have to do other extracurricular things....She has occasional responsibilities like that herself, so you know we’re aware of what it means.”*

*“Sure, so yeah I can’t say enough about how supportive my boyfriend’s been, like just in all ways [laughing], so it’s been life changing, like it’s been life changing, I can’t even say.”*

*“And if I need like a weekend, if I’m going camping, say, or I’m going whatever, I was going to Ottawa, he would help me out all the time, and I do that for him. It’s a very good working relationship.”*

**Meaning code 4: Coping strategies.** Two of the participants cited scheduling as being the primary way in which they coped with their work and non-work commitments:

*“To be honest though, I would say most teachers just don’t really take care of themselves that well during the year, unfortunately. Or they plan for things, you know, in December when we have the two weeks off, or March break, or whatever, like that’s when they can do a lot of things. That said, I mean the school day in and of itself, like for the kids it ends at 3:15, which is still like in business hours, so you know you can... Like I always try to schedule things for that time, you know, but often you can’t, right, you know you’re just told when your appointment is, and it is what it is, and then you end up having to take a whole day off because - for like an hour appointment, just the nature of the job, yeah, it’s pretty wild. Yeah, I think people do try to kind of schedule things around and rearrange their schedules if they can, and especially if that’s been kind of OK’d by our principal then, you know, people feel freer to do that sort of thing, like can you cover my class this period, can I leave early, I don’t have time.”*

*“Yeah, so it’s all scheduling. Scheduling is really essential.”*

The third participant stated that he was working on being more efficient at work so as to reduce the amount of work that had to be done at home:

*“I don’t know if I have anything sort of strictly in place, but I have been trying to take less and less work home. I’ve been trying to get more things done in school at work or “schork” as I like to call it [laughing]. Something I have started doing in the last let’s say year certainly, and occasionally before that is getting up early and going into work early and having that time to do some work. I find that, you know since I’m up early anyway, I might as well get up a little earlier and that’s a good time, you know, when things are still quiet before the day gets going and I have time to be on my own, not distracted by the possibility of doing other things; there’s nothing else to do at that time, and I find that that’s quite a productive time.”*

The fourth participant reported having no coping strategies in place to help him balance his work and non-work commitments:

*“No, work always comes first for me and it’s sometimes an issue in terms of - my wife will want to do something and I say I can’t because I have work, so yeah.”*

**Teacher theme 8: Teacher perceptions of WLB: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions.** The eighth theme related to teacher perceptions of WLB. This theme included four meaning codes: (1) WLB expectations when entering the teaching profession;

(2) Biggest WLB challenges; (3) WLB challenges specific to teaching; and (4) Potential WLB solutions. Examples of each of these meaning codes from participant narratives are set out below.

**Meaning code 1: WLB expectations when entering the profession.** Three of the four teacher participants expected to have relatively high WLB when entering the teaching profession:

*“I don’t think I had really any concerns in that department, I mean another positive or pleasant thing about the job is that you finish relatively early in the day because you start early in the day. I mean certainly you do things after school – I do coaching and such which was not something I was anticipating really getting as involved in as I am, but so I guess at the time I didn’t really fear it; I figured I’d be done by 3:00 o’clock and then that’s it. Now, you know that is sort of more significant, at times when I’m coaching it’s quite intensive.”*

*“Yeah, no, the expectation was I wasn’t going to work like crazy, which is not true, but - and in terms of conflict... I thought it would be fine, because I could leave work early, I could do work at home, so then I could balance it at home instead of having to be stuck there like a lawyer, right, who’s actually stuck at the place.”*

*“I thought, you know, work hard during the day, put in a full day’s work and that, and you know do extra and that sort of thing, but definitely I guess again with the stability aspect of just, you know, set holidays, and weekends off, and that sort of thing, and especially summers of course....But initially it wasn’t kind of my thought, like, ‘oh I’d like to have whatever off.’”*

The fourth participant said that she was aware that over-involvement in student needs was a potential danger but felt that she was well-placed to handle this issue having come to the profession later in life:

*“I was less afraid, like by the time I entered I was less afraid than I would have been earlier of getting really sucked into the lives of my students, but I knew that that was a possibility. I work with such little kids and I was really afraid that they would take over, but because I had two little kids of my own, they were in grades one and five, I really had to make them my priority, and they told me that you should never teach the age that your kids at home are.”*

**Meaning code 2: Biggest WLB challenges.** Each of the four participants identified a different issue as being their biggest challenging to attaining WLB. One participant believed that it would be particularly challenging to be as involved in the school's extracurricular activities once he started a family:

*“Well, you know this is something that again I would be in a better position to answer within a year or so. I think I will have more obligations outside of work then and then I'll see, you know, what it is that's really making it difficult and how it could be better, but perhaps just looking ahead a little bit I think I will probably have to give up some of the extracurricular things I do or certainly cut back on those. I know that other teachers at the school have done that, there's really no choice; I mean sometimes you just have to come home. You know apart from that, apart from a potential future family I don't really see anything that will cause me to, you know, to have to change radically how I do my job.”*

For the second participant, time management and prioritization was the biggest challenge:

*“The biggest challenge to it? I think the time management is a huge challenge for me, so I think that's a huge part in terms of balancing it. I think if I was more efficient, then it would be more balanced. Does that make sense to you? And I think just in terms of the way I value things I think will help me balance, because for the first... Other than this year it's been pretty good, but for the first nine years, crazy workaholic.”*

The third participant reported that it was the extent of her obligations and her high expectations for herself that made it hard for her to find balance:

*“I would just say like the depth and breadth – breadth of them...Yeah, there's just a lot going on, and again I kind of said like I'm hard on myself, so I push myself to do a lot of things and I have high expectations for myself, so I mean I guess if I just kind of relaxed a bit in some ways, but I do want to... You know I think it's my time to work in my life, and you know it's like I don't have kids and I don't have certain commitments and stuff, so it's my time to work hard and kind of see what I can do.”*

For the fourth participant, the biggest issue was feeling like she could always give more of herself to her students:

*“I do wonder if I give my students as much as I could, and then I quickly say I never would be able to, like you can't give all of yourself. I know I could give more, I could... Like I think I have a lot to offer. I think I offer as much as I can in the time that I have them. I'm wondering if maybe I could be a little more organized in how I give them that stuff, and to be a little more organized I'd have to take a little more time outside of being with them. So, and I think that might come as - I don't know, as you know, maybe*

*I won't be able to play soccer forever, and I don't think I'm denying them anything, I just think I could be giving them more, and that sort of plays on my sense of responsibility."*

**Meaning code 3: WLB challenges specific to teaching.** Two of the participants felt that the rigidity of their schedule was a WLB challenge unique to teaching. Three of the participants also cited the high level of responsibility for their students as a WLB challenge not present in other professions. For example:

*"Well, I do think that the sort of, you know, tight schedule or rigid schedule of teaching is a feature of the job that doesn't, you know, isn't there for a number of other jobs, not all, but there are other jobs where it's sort of more relaxed, your hours, when you can be there, when you can't, what time you can take off, you know in the middle of the day for example, which we can't do. I mean if something happens, you know, when I'm in class, first of all I'm not reachable, and secondly it would have to be some sort of radical intervention for someone else to suddenly come in and take over my class and I'd have to leave. You know it can happen, but as I said I think that would be pretty radical."*

*"I think specifically would be just how rigid it is and how kind of all-encompassing it is, so you kind of just leave your personal stuff behind and focus on like being this teacher and this whatever, counselor, nurse, and like all that.... And so there's, and then just - like I can't be a minute late, like I can't leave a minute early if no one's there to cover, so it just is this huge responsibility to my students and stuff. I think if that could be relaxed it would just be a whole different ballgame..."*

The fourth participant felt that, to some extent, he would experience challenges to WLB regardless of his profession, but he also felt that it would be easier to manage his time if he were in another field:

*"I think I would have them regardless of... Well, I don't know, every job has a lot of work, like [my wife] does a crazy amount of work. I just think teachers have more work than people think they have. Like if I was bagging groceries at a store I wouldn't care, right, but that's not really a career - or is it? It depends what your definition of career is. No, I think part of it is obviously an internal thing, that's me, but I think other jobs would be less stressful or easier to manage your time and your work-life, so..."*

**Meaning code 4: Potential WLB solutions.** Two of the participants felt that they would have higher WLB if they procrastinated less or were generally more efficient with their work. For example:

*“You know I think I’m always trying to be a little more - procrastinate a little less, be a little more sort of productive during the time at school, you know that’s really the time to do things. It’s difficult sometimes because being with a class of students, let’s say two periods in a row, if they’re rowdy you just really want a break, you know, it’s been two and a half hours of dealing with kids straight and you just want to take a break, but you know at the same time you know that there’s some work to be done. So, that’s one thing that I’m trying to do is be more and more productive in school during the school hours, you know, with work that I alternatively could take home.”*

The third participant suggested that she would have higher WLB if she had more time to reflect on or debrief with colleagues regarding her work:

*“I think just like in terms of like mental health I think it would be really beneficial for there to be more time for reflection built into a day or a week, like if there were kind of regular times just to even like meet with your colleagues or kind of sit down with your own notes, and like just yeah, look over what’s going on in your classroom, like the dynamic and stuff. Like I know in high school they, I think it’s maybe once a month now at least they have a late start, and so the teachers go at the same time and get together and plan, and do all these sorts of things, and then the kids come later.... That said, it’s obviously like a different... It’s a whole other entity, right, because like elementary school there’s just childcare issues and all of that for parents to think of, so it’s not as flexible; it’s very, very structured, so there just isn’t that sort of away time or downtime.”*

The fourth participant suggested that increasing the number of social workers and teaching assistants in the schools, as well as increasing consistency in teaching styles, would increase WLB:

*“I think putting more social workers in our schools, I think having assistants, even floating assistants, I think making sure that the culture of the school is consistent, I think that in and of itself helps, where all teachers talk in the same way to the students, I think that’s huge.”*



## **Lawyer Themes**

Six themes were identified for lawyer participants. The six lawyer themes that emerged were: (1) Amount and pace of work; (2) Meaningfulness, responsibility and security of work; (3) Work culture and client demands; (4) Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements; (5) Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies; and (6) Lawyer perceptions of WLB: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions.

Table 3 sets out the frequency with which each lawyer theme was endorsed by the lawyer participants. Each of these themes is discussed in greater detail below, including the meaning codes identified for each theme along with participant quotes reflecting each meaning code. The methodology used for assigning meaning codes to participant narratives is set out in Appendix E.

Table 3

*Lawyer Participant Summary Table*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Theme 1: Amount and pace of work</b>	<b>Theme 2: Meaningfulness, responsibility and security</b>	<b>Theme 3: Work culture and client demands</b>	<b>Theme 4: WLB arrangements</b>	<b>Theme 5: Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies</b>	<b>Theme 6: Expectations of WLB</b>	<b>Total # of themes endorsed</b>
LM-1	9	23	22	5	7	6	6
LM-2	10	11	16	3	10	6	6
LF-1	9	13	21	6	12	5	6
LF-2	11	13	21	4	7	6	6
<b>Total # of participants endorsing each theme</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	

*Note.* Each theme was counted only once per passage of continuous text (ignoring reflections and encouragers from the interviewer) even if that theme arose multiple times in that passage.

**Lawyer theme 1: Amount and pace of work.** Four meaning codes were identified within the theme of amount and pace of work: (1) Hours worked; (2) Workload; (3) Work pace; and (4) Spillover. Participant quotes reflecting each of these meaning codes are set out below.

**Meaning code 1: Hours worked.** The number of hours worked by participants ranged from 45 to 60 hours per week. For example:

*“Well, I mean I’m probably in the office Monday to Friday 10 hours a day, and then I would say that I spend probably another six or seven most weekends. I mean that’s not all billable time obviously, but I’m there at least 10 hours a day.”*

*“Well, I in the last year switched to a practice area where the work load’s a bit more manageable, so in that, since... In the last year I would say I work in the office, like, closer to 40 hours a week; you know, I’m in the office from about 9 to 5:30 Monday to Friday, and then most nights I might do, you know, an hour to 3 hours of work at home a night. So, I guess you could add, you know, 5-15 hours nights and weekends, and some - on the average week - there could be more, could be less. You know, prior to that, I had a transactional practice, corporate practice, and you know some weeks was working, you know, well more on average like 50-60 hours a week I would say, and then again some weeks more, some weeks less, yeah.”*

**Meaning code 2: Workload.** Participants described the workload as very up-and-down in nature. For example:

*“Again, it really varies because it’s such an up and down practice, so you know, and it depends how many different files you’re dealing with at a time, so it’s kind of hard to describe. It’s not like I have a finite amount of things to do, like 15 contracts to turn or whatever; it’s sort of whatever comes up that week has to be done.”*

*“Well, I think that’s a hard question because I am normalized to it, so to me it just seems like normal, but I think someone else might think it was a lot of work, you know, so I think we’re just a bit, especially so many years in you’re a bit conditioned to not think that it’s that much work, but and it varies so much, you know, as you know the practice ebbs and flows, so some weeks there is a ridiculous amount of work to do and those are the weeks when I’m way above those average hours, and it’s too much, and everyone knows it but there’s nothing - you have no choice but to do it.”*

**Meaning code 3: Work pace.** All four participants described the pace of work as being very fast for most of the work they were required to do. For example:

*“And the timeframes are quite short generally in my area, because it is sort of urgent, because companies are running out of money and these things have to be done quite quickly, so I know like on corporate transactions, you know, a deal might take a couple months to come together, and you know, and you might turn an asset purchase agreement, like, you know, 15-16 times before you finalize it, and in my practice area that is just not how it works – it’s weeks, not months. So, it really just varies and depends on, you know, what’s happening, and I could find out on a Friday that, you know, something needs to be done by a Monday...”*

*“Again, it’s too fast quite frankly. What we’re being asked to do is often very complicated and it requires thought, and it doesn’t have a precise answer, and requires judgment quite honestly that, you know - and the expectation is like we all carry the common law around in our heads and can answer any question at a moment’s notice. The pace is just too fast, again for the level of quality and precision that people want and expect and quite frankly are entitled to.”*

**Meaning code 4: Spillover.** All four lawyer participants reported experiencing interference from work matters in their non-work roles and spent a significant time outside of traditional office hours either working or thinking about work. For example:

*“And it interferes with every other part of your life, and some weeks you’re not busy at all, so you know, that’s why you keep going.”*

*“If I get home at 6:30, I expect that I would, depending on how busy I am, think of it [work] for a minimum of an hour, and often more. So, if I have to do work, obviously that counts, but even if I’m not doing work, but doing something busy and I feel guilty about not being at work then I will think about it longer.”*

**Lawyer theme 2: Meaningfulness, responsibility and security of work.** The second lawyer theme of meaningfulness, responsibility and security of work included the following eight meaning codes: (1) Reasons for entering legal profession; (2) Importance of career; (3) Sources of job satisfaction/meaning; (4) Responsibility/autonomy; (5) Increased stress with increased seniority; (6) Promotional opportunities; (7) Job security; and (8) Intentions for the

future. Examples of participant statements related to each of these meaning codes are provided below.

**Meaning code 1: Reasons for entering the legal profession.** Participants reported having various reasons for entering the legal profession, including perceptions that they would not get into (or were not suited to) other fields of study, financial stability, enjoying a law course in elementary school and the influence of television.

*“I was working at a legal publishing firm which is not really what I wanted to be doing when I thought of publishing, so it wasn’t very satisfying from a job perspective, and I mean the salary was never going to be more than like \$40,000 or \$50,000 a year, which in Toronto was kind of frightening, so I just decided to go to law school quite honestly. I mean law school because I wasn’t smart enough to be an engineer or a doctor, so... I think stability more than anything. I had a sense that it was a profession that once you were in you were pretty much in for life and that you would always make a reasonable standard of living, and so it was the security more than anything frankly.”*

*“... I’d always had an interest in law, no particular reason; perhaps was influenced by television or otherwise, but when I left teacher’s college I decided I was interested in pursuing that. ...I needed money. I got a job there as a summer student; I stayed there, I liked it.”*

*“It’s hard to say, because I, for some reason, at an early age decided that I just wanted to be a lawyer - like at age 10, and I did, you know, something in school that was like an introduction to law and I really just loved it, decided that that was it and I wanted to be a lawyer; however, I had no idea what a lawyer really did, I now realize. I didn’t have any family members who were lawyers, so for some reason I just clung on to this plan to be a lawyer, stuck to that my whole life, followed through with it, then became a lawyer and was like oh, this is what lawyers do [laughing].”*

*“It’s very, very difficult to get into medical school, and I was I guess not as dedicated to it as I really would have needed to be to actually pursue that. So, I graduated from university, I was kind of debating what to do. I had the idea that maybe I’d go do my Master’s, but I felt that was sort of just delaying the inevitable, because you know I really didn’t want to stay in academia and I knew that would be too boring, and in order to get the kind of job in the science field, like you really need almost like a PhD, like a Master’s wasn’t really going to, you know, get me anywhere with anything. ...So, I thought I needed to change tracks, and to be honest, I don’t know, law just seemed as good enough as anything else, watching episodes of Ally McBeal [laughing].”*

**Meaning code 2: Importance of career.** All four participants placed high importance on their career and two stated that being a lawyer was an important part of their identity. For example:

*“It’s very important. I mean I wish it wasn’t, but it is in all honesty. In many ways I think it’s like what defines me, right, like if I were to lose my job I think I’d be like really, I don’t know what I’d do; I’d be completely at loose ends. Everything else would be tainted with that, and I don’t think I’d find much happiness unless I found something equivalent, and unfortunately I don’t think I will.... because I don’t think, I mean going in-house is not equivalent; there is still way more status to being a firm lawyer.”*

Two participants felt that they might find other careers equally fulfilling. For example:

*“It is important from the perspective that... Financially, we could certainly live off my wife’s salary. I like working, I like interacting with people, I like being responsible for others and being a mentor. If someone told me tomorrow that I could no longer be a lawyer, but I was going to have an equivalent job that I liked, making relatively equivalent money, would it bother me? No. So, if someone told me tomorrow I could do X, and it wasn’t being a lawyer, but it was something I enjoyed, and was good at, and I could make equivalent money, I have no great love for the law.”*

*“Well, I don’t know, like I think maybe not that important, but I have a feeling if it was gone I would miss it, you know? I’ve never really aspired to be a partner at [the law firm], but I, you know, I obviously am still here so there’s something that keeps me here, not just... It’s not just the path of least resistance, like that’s a big part of it, but plenty of people leave, you know, so I don’t know. Like it definitely would be strange for me to not be a lawyer, for it not to be part of my identity, so it must be important to me, but at the same time if I won the lottery I certainly wouldn’t care that I had stopped working tomorrow. If I could do something else, like tomorrow, I don’t know, I might take that option, you know, but it would just... I don’t know. I don’t know why I’m still here, I don’t know what my... I don’t even know what my aspirations are, so. It’s obviously important to me, but I find it hard to articulate it as why and how important it is, you know, like I really don’t know until... I’d have to like not have it, I think, to really appreciate it.”*

The fourth participant reported initially placing high importance on her career but felt that it was becoming less important to her the less secure she became regarding her future with the law firm:

*“It used to be very important to me. I would say it’s still something I think about often, even though I’m on maternity leave and I’m trying actively not to think about it. I was much more ambitious when I thought there was the prospect of becoming a partner. Now that I see that that’s probably not going to happen, I’m not as ambitious as I once*

*was, because you know I'm ambitious enough to not like get fired and to try and do a good job, and you know, and I actually do enjoy my job, like I enjoy the work that I do. I don't necessarily enjoy the hours that I do them in, I enjoy the people that I work with, but I kind of realized that it's not - that I don't have a future in it, so I've kind of I guess downgraded a little bit on the importance of like scale than what it once was; I think it was once kind of like the most important thing to me and now it's kind of... It's important, and I do want a career, but I guess my emphasis on it is just not what it used to be."*

**Meaning code 3: Sources of job satisfaction/meaning.** Each of the four participants identified different factors that gave them a sense of satisfaction or brought meaning to their work. Two participants reported enjoying the prestige and status that came along with the title of law firm lawyer. The other two participants noted that they appreciated the flexibility their schedules afforded them. Additional sources of satisfaction noted by participants included helping clients, getting along with co-workers, the challenges of the legal work and lifestyle.

*"Like it's not really fulfilling and it's not meaningful, yet you know - which is kind of at odds with what I just said about it being how I define myself. I mean it's like, there is, despite the fact that people hate lawyers, there's status that comes with it, right, and there's certain things you can just do when you say you're a lawyer, and people think certain things about you, and even if they hate lawyers they think well, you know you're smart and successful, and like that is I think the automatic reaction, and I mean it's not fulfilling particularly. What's most fulfilling I guess, and it'll sound like really, really geeky, but the most fulfilling experiences I have are solving problems, right, and not like we need to get money wired on Monday, right, like that's not solving a problem, that's just a pain in the ass. Like being presented, for example, with a set of historical documents and a legal issue and like digging through things from 30 years ago and coming to a conclusion based on facts and law, right, like I enjoy doing that and that comes up every once in a while.... What I really don't enjoy and what I find thoroughly unfulfilling are all of the administrative tasks and burdens that go with the job..."*

*"I think there's aspects that I'm good at; I'm better than some of the other people at my work, that makes it meaningful and fulfilling for me.... I like knowing I'm making a difference in some small way to some people, so instead of dealing with someone that might not be particularly positive or helpful, they're dealing with me and I might be. I like the people that I work with generally, or at least a subset of them, so I don't dread going to work in the day, and I understand some people do dread going to their jobs. I like the flexibility it can afford me in the sense of I don't have to be there at 9:00*

*everyday and I don't have to leave at 5:00 per se, so I can leave at 2:00 if I need to, I can take a day off randomly or not show up if I don't want to, because I'm a bit more of my own boss, those are appealing aspects of the job that would make - given my wife's job - it would make it difficult to move away from that. I could probably at this point in my life not commit to be someplace at 8:00 and leave at 6:00, or at least it would be challenging."*

*"... so in certain circumstances I enjoy being able to say I'm a lawyer, I mean maybe that's a bit vain but whatever. What do I do, like I don't know, like I... I just don't know, like I've never enjoyed the actual work very much, certainly not when I was in a corporate transaction practice. Now I like to say that I hate it the least [laughing] as I ever have, but I don't mind it, like I don't mind it, which is a major improvement for me. I hated it before, like I just did not enjoy it all, like there were days that I just couldn't bear - oh, I could just barely get through the day, but... You know what, I enjoy the lifestyle is the bottom line I guess and that's probably what a lot of people, what it comes down to.... Well, not only the money, like and what it allows me to, you know, the lifestyle it allows me to lead, but just the general, and this is a thing for private practice only I guess or I guess it varies, but you know, the flexibility of your schedule. So, like although you are expected to be available 24 hours a day, you also have the flexibility when you're not busy you can, and even when you are busy you can still come and go as you please. As you know you don't have set hours, if you have appointments you don't have to tell anybody; you can just come and go. That's a luxury really, you know, and you pay the price for that, but it is there and you'd miss it if you didn't have it I think..."*

*"Well, like I said, I really enjoy what I do on a day-to-day basis, and I feel like that I've worked in a couple different environments and in all of them I felt that I've enjoyed... I enjoy working with people, I enjoy working with my bosses for the most part; there's been a few people that I haven't enjoyed as much working with, and even sometimes working on things that are a bit boring or a bit mundane I've sort of been able to find the satisfaction in doing them, like you know reviewing prospectuses, which is what I did in London, it's not particularly like thrilling, but I enjoyed it, you know, I thought it was a good job; I found challenges to it and I was interested in it. So, I do, I really enjoy those aspects of my career - I enjoy the work, I enjoy the people. What I don't enjoy is the politics, and the moving up, and worrying about that kind of thing, so I think that's part of the reason why, you know, I'm considering other options, is because I'd rather have something where I get to do work, I get to do it in a stable kind of hours, I get to work with people that I like, but I don't have to worry about this constant battle and politics, and brown-nosing, and client development, and all that. I find client development very time consuming and stressful."*

**Meaning code 4: Responsibility/autonomy.** All four participants reported feeling that they had high levels of autonomy and responsibility in their work. For example:



*“I have complete autonomy, complete autonomy; I mean like literally there is nobody, unless I go to somebody and say, ‘could you please review this,’ nobody’s going to review it. Nobody’s looking over my shoulder, I mean the reality is to have gotten to this point, like I’m doing the job and I’m getting stuff to people when they need it, right, otherwise I would have been let go a long time ago, so the expectation is that it’s just going to get done. I mean I don’t have a manager, I don’t have a direct reporting structure.”*

*“On autonomy there are times when I have total autonomy if I’m doing something that’s my own client and I’m running the show, there’s times when I have as much as I did 10 years ago, because I’m... #2, or working on something on behalf of somebody else and I have to answer to them... I certainly have more responsibility now than I did when I was coming up. Normally I am the last level before things go out. That still isn’t always the case, but more often than not, so I have much more responsibility from a service perspective, I certainly have more responsibility from a generating revenue perspective, and participating in firm initiatives perspective.”*

*“I would say it’s fairly high on both levels, like it’s pretty high responsibility and you’re pretty much left to do what you need to do. It depends on the task, it depends on the file, and who’s running it, because some partners are more leave you alone and want you to do your own thing more than others, but yeah it’s pretty much up to you to figure it out, which can be good and bad.”*

**Meaning code 5: Increased stress with increased seniority.** Three of the four

participants felt that they were under greater stress the more senior they got (and hence, the greater responsibility they had) within the law firm:

*“It [increased responsibility] is negative in the sense that it requires a lot more time and can cause greater stress, you know, as an example, in 2001 was I worried whether I had any billable clients? No, nor was I in 2002, 2003, 2004... Am I now? Yes, I’m constantly wondering what I’m going to be able to bill for the year because that’s part of my comp [compensation].”*

*“Billing more hours but also no, like committing more time, so obviously a big part of being a partner is business and client development which, I guess I’m doing a little bit of and I’m doing enough now; they’re certainly happy with what I’ve been doing, but I just know that more is required and I’m not really willing to do more. So, they expect you to just give more of your time, even more of your time to meet clients, dinners, lunches, events, and not only do I not enjoy that part of it, like so it’s even harder to do because I don’t enjoy it, you know, it gets harder and harder now that I have a second child. I don’t want to give up one more second of my time and, you know, so this year was our partnership year as you know, for the people of our year of call [to the Ontario bar], and you know I haven’t really spoken to any of them in detail, but I know*

*that just like [a colleague] I think said...when they all found out, like it was all like a big congratulations...but within like the same day or within a matter of hours they were given another talk, like 'OK now this is what's required,' and it was like a blow, like oh my god this is going to be even harder than the last seven years and I just worked my ass off for two years like to make it right now, and it's like within, you know, a fraction of a moment they're telling you like, 'OK now you're life's going to get even harder.'"*

*"You're - rather than doing a small bit of a large thing, you might be managing the whole large thing and part of your work is delegating to the people doing the small bits and the junior people, and it only gets more stressful because obviously as you get more responsibility in any field it comes with more stress. So yeah, the type of work changes, but, and if anything you feel even more pressure for the time because you have, in addition to your own piece, coordinate several other people, and that you make sure they're getting things to you in time for you to turn it around... You know maybe when you're younger you can get away with a few, like, mistakes and things like that, but as you get older that just goes away, like there is no room for mistake or..."*

The fourth participant reported some benefits to being a senior lawyer that she did not enjoy as a junior associate. However, she also reported experiencing greater stress related to increased responsibility and client contact as a senior associate:

*"Yeah, I mean I guess in general when you're first starting out the types of tasks you are asked to do are much more simple, and you're asked to complete... I think you're given longer deadlines because it just takes you longer to do things, but you're also expected to work longer, I think, when you're more junior or work more erratically I should say, like if something's going to take you all night to do it, you know, that's just, you know, that's kind of the crap flows downhill kind of, you know, even with seniority is that the person who's the most junior is the one who stays all weekend, or works all night, or you know, if someone has to do that. So, I definitely would say that in my junior years there was more erratic - it was more erratic in terms of the pacing, and in terms of the tasks, you know, it was the big research projects that would take a long time and be more, you know, more lengthy, or the like non-skilled stuff where you just have to like review lots of documents and summarize them or whatever... But that being said, the buck stops - now, like running your own deals and stuff the buck stops with you, so if the deal's going to close at 10:00 o'clock at night, I can't just like run off and leave it with a junior associate because they can't handle it. So, it leads to you I think being more on all the time, because clients need an answer not from your boss, but from you, and if it's like 10:00 o'clock at night they still need the answer."*

**Meaning code 6: Promotional opportunities.** The two participants who were not yet partners both felt that their promotional opportunities within the firm were limited:

*“...I don’t feel that I’m on the partnership track necessarily, because expectations are even higher once you get to that point in terms of hours and a host of other things, none of which I think I’m doing enough of, so as hard as I feel that I’m working, I don’t think I’m working hard enough to be a partner. Again, because my group is a little bit different, I think the expectations are slightly different, and you know if I stuck around for a few years and had a really good few years maybe it would be a possibility, but I just don’t think I’m willing... I think I know that more is required and I don’t think I’m willing to do any more, so I’m trying to be a bit realistic about it and I think that it probably will not be an option for me, so my goal - and I have no, like there’s no question that they will just tell me to leave at some point, like I have no sense of security unless I’m willing to do like what’s required, you know what I mean?”*

*“I think amongst all firms they’ve really tightened the requirements for partnership, and it kind of used to be like you stick around long enough, you pay your dues, if you’re, you know, good enough you’ll become partner, and now I think that expectation is not the case, like I think it’s much, much more difficult to be a partner, and even when you do become partner you may not be an equity partner; you might be an income partner and you don’t have... You’re still sort of an employee essentially, like you’re not, it’s not like you’re safe, you know what I mean? You’re still having to like strive to, you know, move up.”*

**Meaning code 7: Job security.** One participant reported that his sense of job security was dependent on his performance day-to-day:

*“That changes from day to day; I mean I have to say there was a period earlier in the year where I was feeling very insecure. The last couple of months... It honestly, like it changes, it really, and my sense of where I am within the firm has nothing to do with sort of the prevailing trends most of the time or like what’s going on generally. It’s whether I’m feeling successful or not, so it really is determined by my successes. So, if I’ve closed a deal and I’m happy about it, I tend to have a much stronger sense of my value to the place and my ability to move forward. If I make a mistake, which I do pretty regularly, even the tiniest little mistake will tend to shatter all of that and the entire edifice crumbles, right, but it tends to be an all-or-nothing proposition, like I have a really hard time looking at it in the aggregate; it’s like a very immediate reaction, and a lot of it is because I mean we are expected to be perfectionists and we’re not.”*

One participant reported feeling fairly secure in his job:

*“Job security I feel ... relatively strong. I think I bring some things to the table that we lack at our firm. I don’t think I will ever be one of the highest earners; I’m competing against people who don’t have the challenges I do, and by that I mean I’m one of the only people there I can think of who has a working spouse with a nontraditional at a minimum 9-5 type job. So, the people I am competing against, for lack of a better word, although we would not normally use that, or that I’m being compared do not have the*

*time constraints I have. They're either single without kids or have primarily a wife or other spouse who stays at home, and therefore whatever they can offer on the home front is gravy. I don't have that, don't want it, I don't have it anyways."*

The other two participants (both of whom were not yet partners in the firm) did not feel secure in their positions:

*"I don't feel that secure at all, which no one in a law firm can..."*

*"I think in the short-term that I'll stay there and it'll be fine, but if you don't make partner, like you have to leave eventually, and some people they're more aggressive about getting rid of - not getting rid of, but you know - than others...So, for the moment I haven't been like given a timeframe in terms of exit or anything like that, but I also am not being told I'll be a partner, so I don't know. I don't know what my timeframe is, maybe a couple of years or less until I'll be given kind of a more definitive leaving ask."*

**Meaning code 8: Intentions for the future.** Two of the participants (the two partners interviewed) had no plans for the future and hoped to simply continue doing what they were doing:

*"I don't have a long-term plan. I mean I would like to be an equity partner in a couple of years. I don't have any sense of whether there's any realistic expectation there, but I also think I've got at least another two and a half years before they can my ass if they're not happy with me, so I'll just keep doing my job."*

*"To be honest, I don't have any, like I'm kind of living day-to-day right now. I don't have plans in the sense of in the next eight years I want to be making X or I want to be on committee Y; again, I'm just kind of going along."*

The third participant was open to partnership but was prepared to leave for an in-house counsel position if the firm did not make her a partnership offer:

*"Well, like I just said I am open to partnership, like if it's on terms that are acceptable to me, and if not I'll move on, and I guess at this point if they asked me I would say I would look for an in-house position in the field that I'm in right now, because I don't mind this work and I assume it would be a pretty manageable role in - in-house, but you know I just, in five years from now could be doing it, but I think right now that's my plan. ...I need more experience at the firm to be qualified, so I need to... You know I'm hoping that I can get in a few years without this talk of 'it's time to leave the firm.' That's like my main goal right now is to just get in like at least two or three more years there before I'm at that point so that I then have enough experience to go to in-house."*

The fourth participant was actively looking for in-house counsel positions:

*“So, we kind of went from being overstaffed to understaffed, so I know that they would like me to come back [from maternity leave] like soon. Yeah, at the eight or nine month point they would, they would definitely like me to be back, but I would prefer not to do that, because I don’t really feel like there’s any advantage to me, other than money I suppose, and I’d like to look for a new job. So, my plan was to at the eight or nine month point start looking for a new job with a view of probably going back to work at the 12 month point, and if I hadn’t found another job then I’d go back to [the law firm], but if I had found another job then I would take that other job, and if it was a little bit before the year, like it was 10 months or whatever, then I would go back at 10 months but to a new job. My intention was not to go back really to [the law firm]. So, we’ll see how that works out, I don’t know.”*

**Lawyer theme 3: Work culture and client demands.** Four meaning codes were identified under the third theme of work culture and client demands: (1) Unpredictability/perceived control; (2) Work culture/expectations; (3) Client demands; and (4) Employee morale. Examples of participant statements related to each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Unpredictability/perceived control.*** All four participants reported that their workdays were highly unpredictable, both in terms of how many hours they had to work each day (though this was less of an issue for the participant who was in a non-transactional practice) and in terms of what they would be required to do over the course of the workday. For example:

*“It’s completely unpredictable which, which is the worst part of my job. If there was some way to predict what I had to do on any given day, that would be OK, but it’s the constant shuffling of responsibilities and the anxiety that comes with knowing that like on most days you aren’t going to... Unless you want to be there until 3:00 in the morning everyday, like you’re going to upset somebody on some level; you’re going to be too slow to respond, so it’s a triage.”*

*“Well, again my current schedule’s a bit more predictable now because I’m not in a transactional practice, so it’s more even and more manageable, so I know that I’m*

*going to be in the office about 9:00 – 5:30. It's not predictable how busy I'll be, so you know that's what affects how much work I do at nights and weekends, but you know other than... Before I joined this group it was completely unpredictable and it still is to some extent, like certainly someone could still call me at 5:00 on a Friday and I would have to stay; it doesn't mean I'm immune from that now, but you know mine is slightly more manageable, but generally a transactional or litigation practice is completely unpredictable of course, so at any moment you could be called upon to work for the following 48 hours at the drop of a hat and that's that, there's no option."*

The two partners noted that they had some latitude in determining when they could complete some of their work. However, in general, the lawyer participants reported believing that they had little control over their workload or workflow. For example:

*"I have no freedom to determine that [number of hours worked each week]. I mean if I want to keep my job I have to maintain a minimum level. So, I could decide not to work for a month I suppose and then work solidly for two months, so there's flexibility in terms of when I do the work, but no the amount of work has to be done."*

*"We have freedom. I guess the answer is a lot and none. You have a lot of freedom when you're not working or if you happen to be on something that doesn't require an immediate response. So, if I have something that requires 20 hours, but needs to be done in a two-week span, it's totally up to me if I decide I want to do all 20 in week two or all 20 in week one. ...If I'm working on a transaction that needs answers, I have no flexibility on that."*

*"Well, not really any still. Because I'm still - just joined a new practice area I'm a bit more junior in that respect where I just depend completely on everyone else for my work. So, I just work... I have to do what comes, so in a week that I don't get as much work, I'm not as busy, and a week that I get tons of work, I'm really busy, and I really have no control at all actually, so I just have to do what comes and no one cares if that's a little or a lot. I mean they prefer it would be a lot [laughing]."*

*"And you're really under control too of your superiors, and you know sometimes it's like the client and sometimes it's just it is what it is, like you know you can't control it, especially when it's bankruptcy, like someone files and you've got to do something about it, right? But sometimes it's the partner who's giving you the work's fault and that really is harder to accept when it's because somebody else has been disorganized and realizes on a Friday, 'oh crap, I need to give this to somebody because I haven't dealt with it and it's got to be done on Monday,' when they could have given it to you a week ago and you wouldn't have to, you know, ruin your life to do it."*

**Meaning code 2: Work culture/expectations.** One participant reported that the law firm was characterized by an increasingly profit-driven, cutthroat culture in which lawyers feared for their job security.

*“I mean there was always a fast pace, but it was a sense of collegiality, and that sense of collegiality is being lost and it’s becoming more and more of a business where form over substance seems to triumph more often than not, so the people that talk a good game, even if they’re shitty lawyers, are the ones who seem to be getting ahead, which was never the case in the past I don’t think, and people who have been marginalized, whether you know just by the development of their practice or because of lost clients or, you know, those sorts of situations are not being given very much time to do complete turnarounds any longer, so it’s becoming much more cutthroat, and I think particularly in the last couple of months as sort of the Euro crisis has become more and more evident, and we’re starting to acknowledge that it’s actually having an impact on Canada, I’ve seen that like people are scared right now and there’s a lot of fear in the workplace, so...”*

All four participants reported believing that the firm had very high expectations, including that lawyers be available at all times of day and night to meet client demands, produce perfect work (even on very short notice) and meet an annual billable hours target equivalent to approximately 7.5 hours of billable work for each day of the traditional workweek (not including business development and other non-billable duties).

*“Well, I mean the expectation is that we’ll, you know if you want to succeed you’ll be billing a minimum of 1,900-2,000 hours a year and that you will also be putting in as much time as is necessary to develop business in a credible way, and the expectation is that you’ll be available 24 hours a day even if you’re on vacation. I mean this is all obviously my sense right, I mean...”*

*“And I think the expectation is you’re available 24 hours a day, literally. So, I mean obviously they expect you to sleep, but other than like late sleeping hours... I certainly get emails from partners at 11:00 at night and they would expect a response I think, so, or they would... I don’t think they would expect a response, but they would expect me to check right before I went to bed to see if I have any email, I mean that’s one thing.”*

*“...I genuinely feel that, you know, I’m not exaggerating these expectations, like I don’t feel that I’m saying I need to achieve perfection; I think it’s what’s expected...”*

*“But it’s extremely stressful when you’re slow or your group is slow and you’re not able to make target even though you are available 24 hours a day, you know what I mean? Like it’s almost worse when you’re slow because you can never turn a job*

*down, you can never turn work down, you have to be 100% available all the time, because you can't be like 'oh, well I'm too busy,' because you're not, and you're still not going to make target, and the firm's still going to be unhappy with you. So, I don't know. So, in terms of the, you know, that's I think the overall the biggest issue in terms of what the expectations are is the expectation is that you make target or you exceed target."*

*"I find client development very time consuming and stressful. Actually, I guess I should have mentioned that during the sort of the evening requirements and that. That is one aspect of my job that I really don't enjoy is the high expectation of doing a lot of business development, which means a lot of schmoozing clients and going out, and... In my group in particular there's a huge emphasis on it, and like during the Christmas season, like in December, there's so many events and dinners that I think it was like two or three nights a week taken up with, you know, dinners and cocktail parties with clients, which is a huge time commitment, and when you're expected to also be doing your work it's very stressful trying to, you know, not cancel on these things because they're clients and you don't want to be rude, and also to do all your work."*

**Meaning code 3: Client demands.** All four participants cited client demands as being closely related to spillover and unpredictability in their workflow. For example:

*"I mean for example, like on Friday afternoon I got a call from like a major client, right, and they were trying to do two home purchases from one of their mine sites, but they couldn't get a certified cheque out of the Bank of Montreal, even though that's where they have an account, right, and I don't know why, but what they said was, 'Could you please find somebody in Toronto at the Bank of Montreal and get this fixed?' I was like, 'Well, sure, at 4:00 o'clock on a Friday I can start phoning random people at the fucking Bank of Montreal, but like I don't think I'm going to get much help, I really don't, and if I were on the off chance able to find somebody who even knew anything about your account, they wouldn't speak to me because I'm not authorized to speak to them, so I could do that.' And they're like, 'OK if you wouldn't mind.' 'Let me try to rephrase, like what you're asking me to do is stupid, so no I can't do it,' right? [laughing]. But you can't say that, but you know basically what I was able to do was convince [the firm's Chief Financial Officer] that if they wired the \$430,000 we'd be willing to cut a certified cheque ourselves on proof of wiring, not on proof of receipt, right, but that took me 45 minutes, and like it was a completely stupid request, it had nothing to do with providing legal services, right, it was just like the lawyers will fix anything that nobody else feels like they have the time or the inclination to bother with."*

*"Something came up, so this client emails [the partner] with some crisis, gets his out-of-office [automated email response], then she emails me and [the other partner on the file]... and says, you know, 'Whatever is happening. Just emailed [the partner]; I see that he's on vacation and can one of you deal with this?' This was like 6:30 or so on a Monday, so I was home right in the middle of giving [my daughter] dinner and [my*



*husband] was not home, he had to work late that night, so I was on my own and I was trying to respond. [The partner] was in Chile actually and he was really responding to his email regularly, which is depressing, but as a partner especially that's the expectation. So, anyway, over the course of a few hours he and I managed to deal with the problem and respond. Only after that did [the other partner] reply - like I don't know, he had gone those few hours without checking his email I guess, and he replies to the client saying, 'Oh, you know, [LF-1] and I will work it out,' and she replied to him then to say, 'Oh don't worry, [the first partner] and [LF-1] have already dealt with it,' and she said, 'Blackberries means a lawyer is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.' And she's in-house counsel, like she's a lawyer herself, so I think she was like including herself in that category, but I was just like, how depressing is that to just see it written down like that, and it's true, you know like here he is in Chile on vacation with his family and it's like he's in the office, like she, you know, and that is just sad. ...Like for clients that's amazing and for us it's depressing, you know."*

**Meaning code 4: Employee morale.** Participants described employee morale as being generally very low and tied to factors such as overwork and feeling underappreciated by senior lawyers. For example:

*"Right now it's probably at the lowest level I've ever seen it."*

*"I think when it is very busy and everybody is overworked it's poor. I think when there are times when it's not busy or when we are having events that, at least a certain subculture of the people there or group of the people quite like it and think morale is good. We are suffering a little bit from a lack of leadership. I think it could be improved if we had stronger leaders."*

*"I don't know, it's probably low I would say as among associate lawyers generally, anyway, because of the things I said earlier, you know, working in a place where you're expected to be perfect, and no one can be perfect, so you're constantly being made to feel that you're inadequate, so that doesn't make for a high morale workplace, and you know some groups and some partners are better than others, but they don't really give you enough appreciation or gratitude for how hard you work and what you do, so you're just left feeling like no one cares, you know you've just probably given up so much of your own time, weekends, plans, and it's just - there's nothing; it's like the bare minimum of what they expect, and you know so that just doesn't leave you with a good feeling. ... But in my group, again like we're able... Since I've joined, especially like I've tried to introduce a bit more social activity in our group because it wasn't a very social group, so we have associate lunches, you know, and we do that, so that helps, like the associates are generally a pretty good group of associates, so I think we try to like make the day a little bit more enjoyable for each other, but you know really the partners set the tone and sometimes it's no fun to be there, yeah. You do what you can to kind of just make it bearable is what it's like; it's not a naturally like high morale environment."*

**Lawyer theme 4: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements.** Theme four, availability and uptake of WLB arrangements, comprised the following three meaning codes: (1) Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements; (2) Management support for WLB arrangements; and (3) Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements. Participant quotes related to each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements.*** Other than maternity leave, the lawyer participants all felt that there were few, if any, WLB arrangements available to lawyers unless they were female lawyers possessing a specialty valued by the law firm. For example:

*“Well, there are none available for lawyers, right? I mean there are some individuals who have developed real practice expertise in areas that nobody else has it, and I’m thinking of somebody like [name of lawyer] who on the surface is being given a special arrangement. I’m not convinced it ever really worked for her the way it was supposed to, but it was only granted, again because she had a really specific set of skills that nobody else had.”*

*“Zero. There aren’t...If you are a female, then there is probably the option of trying to work a reduced workload and getting special arrangements.... There are some people whose arrangements are they work four days a week unless they’re on a specific deal that requires them to work longer, none of them are male.”*

*“None [laughing]. [Pause] Like, you know, none that come to my mind. I’m just thinking like is there anything? I don’t think there’s anything formal, I mean they, you know, maternity leave. I guess that’s the only... And so at [the law firm] the maternity policy is, you’re entitled to a full year of course like by statute. They top up your salary for four months, which is pretty normal among law firms, and is much better than some other employers, like RIM gives no top up for example, which is strange, like government does full top up for a year and lots of companies give no top up, so four months is not bad, and [the law firm] will also top up men for four weeks who want to take paternity leave which is actually pretty good...”*

*“I mean I think we have some seminars and stuff that they run with like people coming in and tell you how to, you know, do that, but at the end of the day the bottom line is that I think, you know, they would prefer that you not really have that much work-life balance, that work would, you know outpace life....I mean the programs they do have*

*are really probably more designed to make you be able to work more, frankly, so that you don't burn out so you can work more. You know what I mean?"*

**Meaning code 2: Management support for WLB arrangements.** Management support for WLB arrangements was viewed as being very low. For example:

*"...we don't currently have a partner maternity leave policy in the firm, so last year [name of partner] was off for a year, which has been a source of great concern, I mean you know and the reality is she's going to be fucked on points for the rest of her life over this; nobody's ever going to forget it or forgive her..."*

*"I'm not familiar with certainly many situations anymore where someone gets reduced hours arrangements, absent some kind of compelling medical or family reason. I don't think childcare any longer is enough, although I think for a period it was, and certainly if you're a specialist there are some arrangements that can be made in lieu of losing you, but for the general lawyer to come up and say 'I only want to work four days instead of five days,' I don't think that flies any longer."*

*"...it's probably a bit frowned upon to take paternity leave or parental leave...."*

*"Maybe I'm being cynical, but I don't really think they're that concerned, and maybe when the economy is booming again, and if they're having associate problems again, then maybe they'll start actually caring, because they'll have too many people - you know, they'll have a staffing issue, but at the moment I think because of the economy and having surplus staff, I don't really think they care. If people leave because they're overwhelmed, oh well, you know, there's plenty more; right now there's plenty more where they came from, so..."*

**Meaning code 3: Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements.** Both the feasibility of existing WLB arrangements and lawyers' uptake of such arrangements were also seen as low. For example:

*"...I think the firm would say is that you've got the ability to work from home as necessary, although anyone who's got children and has tried to work at home with their children will realize working at home is useless."*

*"I think they're being phased out, so nobody can really take advantage of them, again absent special circumstances."*

*"...I think it's pretty common and accepted that most associates will take a full year maternity leave which is good..."*

*“...so some people definitely are doing that [flexible/reduced hours arrangements] at [the law firm]. It doesn’t work out quite as well, it’s not quite as accepted [as at LF-2’s previous law firm], and it just depends on your group and what you can manage, but there are some, so you know I’ve ... and maybe it’s working well for some of them.”*

**Lawyer theme 5: Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies.** The following three meaning codes were identified under the theme of personal factors: challenges and coping strategies: (1) Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles; (2) WLB support from family; and (3) Coping strategies. Examples of participant statements related to each of these meaning codes are set out below.

***Meaning code 1: Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles.*** Participants listed a range of non-work activities, including primarily passive forms of leisure. Three participants also cited significant and/or increasing childcare commitments. For example:

*“Watching TV, and reading books, and recently we’ve been doing a lot of stuff because the apartment looks nice now, so we’re sort of innervated to go and look at things, and buy things, but you know watching TV and reading books really. I haven’t exercised in about five years....For relaxation I smoke cigarettes, I occasionally smoke weed and I drink.”*

*“At home with my kids, my old lady, you know.... I like to watch TV, go to movies, read. Do I do that a lot? Not particularly. My normal day is go home at 6:30PM, play with the kids, put them to bed, 8:30PM comes around, I watch an hour of TV, go upstairs, read for a bit, and go to bed. So, I don’t have any specific activities that I do. I like to work out, but I have to try and fit that in when I can. I don’t have a particularly large amount of hobbies.”*

*“Well, as I just said we’re in this stage of our life we’re mostly just, you know, going and doing kids activities and often our socializing is centered around children’s activities now. So, you know - park, and playground, and whatever children’s stuff, and then of course we just try to also do other things like get together with friends - dinners, and things like that, but we would normally exercise, and travel, and do things like that. But we, just at this stage of our life those things are not quite as prominent in our lives, but otherwise there’s nothing in particular I would say, especially nothing I do for like relaxation unfortunately, but...”*

*“Well, during the weekdays when I’m working I don’t really have a lot of spare time, so I mean you really only have time to like come home, eat dinner maybe, and maybe watch a little bit of television and go to bed. So, frankly I don’t really do much during the week, and then on weekends, I don’t know, just doing stuff with family and whatever. I wouldn’t say I actually really have a lot of like hobbies or anything, because I haven’t really... I don’t know, I guess I don’t really have time for them.... I really enjoy... I guess I’m a bit of a movie buff, so I watch a lot of movies. I watch a lot of television, that’s my main... I know that sounds horrible to admit, but that’s probably my main source of entertainment is television and movies. I mean things are going to change now that I have a kid, I think, because you just don’t really want to spend all your time just watching television.”*

*“I guess it’s probably just the unpredictability of my schedule, and now with having a kid it’s going to be more difficult, because you know they just aren’t awake at the hours of the day that I’m not at work. So, I think managing having him and wanting to spend time with him and also work is going to be a huge challenge.”*

**Meaning code 2: WLB support from family.** Participants reported receiving support from their partners, friends and family in the form of sharing of non-work labour and understanding regarding their work commitments. For example:

*“Well, I don’t receive any assistance in helping me manage my time; I mean [my partner] is actually pretty good about it. My family, I don’t have a terribly close relationship with them, so I don’t think it bothers them all that much to be quite honest. ...And I don’t have that many friends. I mean I have like four or five close friends and those are the people that I tend to socialize with the most, and a lot of them are in similar situations, so they actually understand.”*

*“I don’t receive support from anyone other than my spouse, so my spouse and I have a conversation every day about whether we can go home together, one of us needs to stay, one of us needs to go home, that’s it.”*

*“Well, for me I guess I’m very lucky in that my husband [...] like we’re very 50/50 I would say inasmuch as we both can be, so very good support there. You know, like we both work and once we get home everything’s 50/50, so that’s good, and his parents live five minutes away, they’re very helpful, they’re willing to babysit and, you know, they’re not as helpful as my own parents, but they’re still there and they’re pretty good, and then that’s really... I mean I wouldn’t say we get much support from other family and friends in Toronto for managing work-life balance, but then, and then my parents as I’ve told you are going to move here, so that will really, really help because they’re going to baby sit and that will take a lot of stress off me in a lot of ways, so they’ll help with, like me - they’ll help me take care of my house as well as my children, so that will*

*be really good, and I'm very lucky, you know most people aren't in that situation, so..."*

*"I guess [my husband is] pretty good because he doesn't get upset, he's never complained about me working late, he's never said like, 'Oh I don't see you enough' or 'Quit your job because, you know, so we can spend more time together' or anything like that...I hired a cleaning lady, she helps [laughing]. ...Yeah, and in terms of like, you know there's been times when like I went on a work trip and I got delayed, and I had invited everyone for like Thanksgiving dinner and then I had to just call him up and be like so, you're doing Thanksgiving dinner, and he did it, and that was fine. I called up my mom and asked her to like make a turkey, and she did. So, I guess people are pretty, you know, pretty forgiving. I try not to impose too much on people outside of like my parents and [my husband], but that's about it."*

**Meaning code 3: Coping strategies.** Coping strategies included paying others to take care of non-work obligations, prioritization of work, compartmentalization of work and non-work spheres, not making plans (or only making plans that could be cancelled easily) and general acceptance of the unpredictable lifestyle.

*"I mean because I mean I'm in a different situation than a lot of them not having children, right, so at the end of the day all I have to do is worry about myself, and my experience is that if there's a non-work obligation that I can't handle, I pay somebody to do it, so I probably spend more money than I need to in my personal life and I expect that that's how parents handle it too."*

*"...I worked like every Sunday for months because I was on a huge transaction, and I just remember thinking to myself how depressing that was, and then thought, 'Well, I'll just have to in my mind think well that's it, Sunday's a workday, you know my weekend is one day, I have one day off and I just have to accept that or else I'll be miserable, and bitter, and angry.'"*

*"You know when you're a lawyer your life is that every plan you make is temporary and everyone has to know that in your life, and it's really much harder for some than others, depending on what their spouse or partner or friends do and, you know, what the type of lifestyles that they have, and maybe some lawyers are better than others. I like to think I'm better than others at managing my life and, you know, keeping commitments, and not working when you really don't have to, like some people I think are not as good at recognizing what's really required versus what's not. So, I think, yeah, your personal attitude towards your work-life balance is a big thing and it's really the only thing there is, because there's no, you know, it's just how you choose to set the tone of your own, you know, career at [the law firm] or as a lawyer."*

*“Well, for me as you know I like to have my weekends jam packed with plans and that’s why, because that’s my only time to do things, and to see friends, and to do stuff. So, I guess that’s one thing I do to make sure we are seeing friends is like making, you know, planning very far in advance lots of social things.”*

*“I just kind of try and detach... If there’s nothing that can be done about it at that time, then why think about it? And I’m pretty good at turning it off. There’s been the odd time when I’ve been very busy or very stressed that it’s harder to do that, and there’s been the odd time that I’ve been like dreaming about work, which is very annoying, like I’ve been editing contracts in my dreams, and then I wake up and I’m like, ‘No wonder it didn’t make sense, no wonder I can’t work this out; it’s because it’s not real.’....But once I decide I’m kind of off the clock, like mentally I just don’t. Unless I’m going to be billing, I don’t want to be thinking, because I kind of feel like ... you know?”*

*“I guess I don’t really plan things during the week unless it’s like... I guess there’s exceptions, but, because I don’t want to cancel.”*

One participant reported having no coping strategies in place at all:

*“I really don’t have any strategies in place. I do my best to leave at 6:00PM, and there’s times when I leave at 6:00PM when I probably shouldn’t, but I’ve made trying to get home a priority, but I’m not going to pretend I’m a saint, because there’s lots of nights when I stay, and because I don’t want to work at... I could go home, put my kids to bed, and start working at 9:00PM for two hours until 11:00PM. Most of the time I’d rather work from 6:30PM until 8:30PM or 9:00PM and get that part over with and then go home.”*

**Lawyer theme 6: Lawyer perceptions of WLB: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions.** The sixth theme of lawyer perceptions of WLB: expectations, challenges and potential solutions, included the following four meaning codes: (1) WLB expectations when entering the profession; (2) Biggest WLB challenges; (3) WLB challenges specific to law firm; and (4) Potential WLB solutions. Examples of each of these meaning codes from participant narratives are set out below.

**Meaning code 1: WLB expectations when entering the profession.** None of the participants reported expecting to experience major challenges to WLB when entering the profession. For example:

*“Well, I’m not sure what my expectations were. They certainly weren’t that I would spend most of my waking hours either at work or thinking about it.”*

*“I don’t think I ever thought about work-life balance; it didn’t occur to me that lawyers work long hours. I had no idea, I just didn’t even think about that [laughing].”*

*“I didn’t really have any expectations, frankly, because I didn’t know anyone who was a lawyer, I’d never worked in a law office, I’d never really worked in an office, period, I really didn’t know what being a lawyer would actually entail aside from what’s on TV, which as you know is pretty inaccurate.”*

**Meaning code 2: Biggest WLB challenges.** Three of the lawyers cited the unpredictability of their schedule as the biggest challenge to WLB:

*“By far the biggest challenge is just the lack of predictability, because without that everything else would be manageable, but it exists.”*

*“That’s the biggest problem for me is that the pace is so up and down. I would obviously much prefer to work, even extremely hard, for like, you know, eight or nine, you know, from 9:00 until 7:00 everyday knowing that there won’t be days where I’m sitting around doing nothing and there won’t be days where I’m like working until 9:00 o’clock at night, and working all weekend, and being pushed to get something done as quickly as possible.”*

*“I really only see one – the unpredictability. Sorry, I see two. The unpredictability of my life or my workflow and the unpredictability of my wife’s, because she actually works harder than I do, so it’s hard for me to manage my workflow when I don’t know how she’s managing hers.”*

The fourth participant felt that the work expectations were the biggest WLB challenges:

*“The biggest challenge is the work – the expectations at work, meeting them, it’s, so - and you’re just constantly striving to meet these very ridiculous expectations. And then as a result you don’t really do anything good, you know, everyone, this is... Everyone kind of ends up in the same position but... I shouldn’t say anything more, but you know you just end up feeling like you’re not quite adequate at anything - being a, you know, an employee, or a mother, or a friend, or a wife, or a daughter, or anything... So, and it’s all I guess the work expectation, that’s the problem, because like I said in those two*



*months January and February when I wasn't that busy I felt like actually I was enjoying life, and then I get told that I basically could be fired because I wasn't working hard enough those two months, so it's just a very difficult situation."*

**Meaning code 3: WLB challenges specific to law firm.** All four participants felt that many of the WLB challenges they faced are inherent to the law firm structure:

*"I think it's specific to a lawyer's work environment, yes I do. I mean I think everybody deals with unpredictability and reshuffling of priorities, but I think most people say after like 6:00 o'clock in the evening well, I've reshuffled to the extent that I can and unfortunately everything else is going to get done tomorrow. We don't have that option typically, right? You've got your list of things that have to be done on any given day, and as these new things erupt they also have to be done on that day, so the unpredictability also creates, you know, a great amount of time that you have to spend in the office."*

*"Well, I think that the hours and the expectations of constantly being on call are fairly unique to law, like private practice."*

*"It is definitely [the law firm], but some people put more on themselves than they need to work-wise, but I genuinely feel that, you know, I'm not exaggerating these expectations, like I don't feel that I'm saying I need to achieve perfection; I think it's what's expected, and I think I maybe more than others am better at managing it even, and like not allowing it to interfere with my life quite as much as maybe some others do, but even still it's, I mean there's no getting around it; they expect - the expectations are incredibly high."*

*"... I just think the current model of the law firm - of a firm like [the law firm] - it just doesn't allow for any other thing other than associates working excessive hours, you know, that's how it's profitable and it's never going to change. It's not like they're going to bring in extra associates, and people think, people who don't know how it is, like family members or whatever, don't understand why you can't just bring in more people and share the work around, but as you know it just doesn't work like that, like, you know, once you're on a file it's not easily divisible, you know, or I mean it is to a certain extent, but once you have your, you know, once you have your workload, you know, you just have to do it yourself and you can't really share or divide it. So, I don't know, it's hard to explain to people who don't understand, but it's just the way it is and I just think realistically there is no way to make - to improve it, and again it just comes down to hopefully the people you work for, the partners you work for, them being more understanding and allowing, you know, like giving you some slack when you need it and picking up your slack. That's the only way it works really, and that's it, there's just no, there is no way. That's the problem."*

*"I think it's an unfortunate aspect of the job. I don't know what else I would do if they walked up to me and said would I want reduced hours, I don't know if I would agree. If*

*you've got a caregiver who's interested in working five days a week, not four, so if I took that day off, what would I do, besides walk around, and get my hair done, and run errands, that would be helpful and nice to have, but I don't really think our job is one designed for a lot of work-life balance. You're working on a transaction, you're working on a file, you need to get the work done; it's not something that can always wait until Monday."*

One participant, however, did not endorse the theme that unpredictability was a WLB challenge specific to private practice:

*"Yeah, I mean I have to answer yes of course [other jobs have the same unpredictability], because she doesn't have the same job as me, so yeah, there's an example, investment banking, other certain professional firms, certain people that are in private equity from what I've heard. I think we have one of the worst because we're service-driven, so we have to be responsive to our clients, so we're at a bit of their beck and call, whereas other people might decide they want to work late to get something done, but is not always to answer somebody else."*

**Meaning code 4: Potential WLB solutions.** Potential WLB solutions suggested by the lawyer participants included increased availability of flexible work arrangements, better organization and efficiency and technology upgrades.

*"I think that they could offer more flexible work arrangements. I think that face time is highly overrated in private practice, like I did my secondment and it was such a different environment in terms of face time and in terms of flexible work arrangements, like everybody there was entitled to work from home at least some of the time, like maybe not on a regular basis, but it seemed to be much more common to like have a conference call, and you know half the people would be calling in from somewhere else, and that wasn't a big deal, frankly. And you know, maybe it's the nature of the work, but I just feel like a lot of times you really don't need to be there, you know?"*

*"Well, I don't know, like I always feel that I'm too, that I could be doing more, that I'm a bit lazy, and that I should be as I just said, like a bit more organized, making a bit more effort to plan and do things in advance, like meals; even though I said everything goes out the window when you're busy, I still feel that I always could be doing a little bit more to help my own cause, you know."*

*"I could be more effective with my use of time at work, again especially when I'm not busy rather than like, you know, rather than spending hours surfing the net, I should just get what I need to get done and then I could leave at like 5:00PM instead of leaving at the last minute and then realizing I have more work to do on it than I thought and then staying until 7:00 even though I'm not busy."*

*“...we have some of the shittiest IT in the legal community; we’re still working on Windows 2003, and as you well know, I mean if you don’t reboot your machine the night before, you can sit there for 15-20 minutes the next morning.... What’s most infuriating about that from a work-life balance is that it actually does slow us down. I’ve been in situations where, for example, I’ve been there late at night, there’s been one change - like a date change - to be made to 30 documents and there’s no secretary sitting there, and what should take 15 minutes because of our slow technology has taken 45 minutes, which means a lot at that time of day.”*

Table 4 shows a comparison of teacher and lawyer themes based on the meaning codes underlying each theme.

Table 4

*Comparison of Teacher and Lawyer Themes and Underlying Meaning Codes*

Teacher Themes	Lawyer Themes
<b>Theme 1: Amount, pace and predictability of work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hours worked</li> <li>• Workload</li> <li>• Work pace/intensity</li> <li>• Expansion of work roles</li> <li>• Perceived control/predictability/flexibility</li> <li>• Spillover</li> </ul>	<b>Theme 1: Amount and pace of work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hours worked</li> <li>• Workload</li> <li>• Work pace</li> <li>• Spillover</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 2: Self-imposed standards and emotional investment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional investment in student needs</li> <li>• Self-imposed expectations/standards/pressure</li> <li>• Responsibility/accountability</li> <li>• Autonomy</li> </ul>	
<b>Theme 3: Meaningfulness of work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for entering teaching profession</li> <li>• Importance of career</li> <li>• Sources of job satisfaction/meaning</li> <li>• Intentions for the future</li> </ul>	<b>Theme 2: Meaningfulness, responsibility and security of work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for entering legal profession</li> <li>• Importance of career</li> <li>• Sources of job satisfaction/meaning</li> <li>• Responsibility/autonomy</li> <li>• Increased stress with increased seniority</li> <li>• Promotional opportunities</li> <li>• Job security</li> <li>• Intentions for the future</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 4: Collective agreement and job security</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to collective agreement</li> <li>• Job security</li> <li>• Promotional opportunities</li> </ul>	

Teacher Themes	Lawyer Themes
<b>Theme 5: Work culture and community expectations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work culture/expectations</li> <li>• Parent expectations/pressure/involvement</li> <li>• Affluence of community</li> <li>• Employee morale</li> </ul>	<b>Theme 3: Work culture and client demands</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unpredictability/perceived control</li> <li>• Work culture/expectations (perfectionism, responsiveness and billable hours)</li> <li>• Client demands</li> <li>• Employee morale</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 6: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements</li> <li>• Management support for WLB arrangements</li> <li>• Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements</li> <li>• WLB support from colleagues</li> </ul>	<b>Theme 4: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements</li> <li>• Management support for WLB arrangements</li> <li>• Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 7: Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles</li> <li>• Changes in ability to handle workload/pace</li> <li>• WLB support from family</li> <li>• Coping strategies</li> </ul>	<b>Theme 5: Personal factors: Challenges and coping strategies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles</li> <li>• WLB support from family</li> <li>• Coping strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Theme 8: Teacher perceptions of WLB: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WLB expectations when entering profession</li> <li>• Biggest WLB challenges</li> <li>• WLB challenges specific to teaching</li> <li>• Potential WLB solutions</li> </ul>	<b>Theme 6: Lawyer perceptions of WLB: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WLB expectations when entering profession</li> <li>• Biggest WLB challenges</li> <li>• WLB challenges specific to law firm</li> <li>• Potential WLB solutions</li> </ul>

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The aim of this study was to examine the nature of work-life conflict (WLC) as experienced by mid-career members of the teaching and legal professions with a view to determining the extent to which the universal WLC factors identified by previous research apply to specific professions, as well as identifying any WLC factors unique to these fields. The teaching and legal professions were chosen as comparison groups because both professions are known for high burnout and turnover rates but appear to share very little in the way of specific job demands and stressors, thus allowing for an opportunity to test the universality of the WLC factors identified in the literature. The overall findings of this study suggest that the universal WLC factors are relevant in both the teaching and legal professions and that, indeed, there are more similarities than there are differences between teachers and lawyers with respect to the factors responsible for the WLC experienced by members of these two professions; where they appear to differ is in those factors that serve to increase the ability to cope with such WLC.

### **Factors Responsible for WLC in the Teaching Profession**

**Application of universal WLC factors to the teaching profession.** The WLB literature has identified a number of universal or generic factors that are purported to be relevant to the experience of WLC regardless of profession. These include hours worked, amount and pace of work, management support and family-friendly work culture, perceived control, flexible hours and domestic factors/personal supports. The application of each of these factors to the teaching profession is discussed below.

***Hours worked.*** Previous research suggests that WLC can occur as a result of the sheer number of hours spent in the work role as this necessarily reduces the number of hours available for non-work activities and obligations; WLC therefore increases in proportion to the number of hours that must be spent in each of the work and non-work roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). The relevance of the number of hours worked to the experience of WLC was borne out in the case of the teacher participants in this study, who reported working on average 45 hours a week including class preparation, marking and extracurricular activities, with one participant averaging upwards of 60 hours of work per week. While it was possible for the participants to complete some of this work during school hours, all four participants felt that addressing student needs was the priority during the school day and, as such, most non-classroom work was completed in the evenings and on weekends. Thus, another factor relevant to teacher WLC was spillover, the extent to which work activities (or thoughts of work-related matters) invade non-work time (Wallace, 1997).

***Amount and pace of work.*** Allan et al. (2007) found a correlation between WLC and workload pressure (that is, the amount and pace of work) in a sample of public and private sector employees. The results of the present study were equivocal with respect to the relevance of workload to the experience of teacher WLC: two of the four participants reported finding the workload to be manageable other than at certain predictably busy times of the school year, while the other two participants felt that their workload was heavy throughout the school year. The relevance of work pace to teacher WLC was more apparent: work pace was a WLC factor for three of the four teacher participants, one of whom characterized the workflow as “non-stop” during classroom hours. The fourth participant

noted the regimented nature of class periods but did not find the pace of work to be unmanageable. Notably, this participant was the sole high school teacher interviewed; the level of school and the age of the children taught may therefore be a factor that interacts with the WLC factors of work pace and workload.

***Perceived control and flexibility of hours.*** According to the job strain model (Karasek, 1979), the worker's perceived degree of control over job demands is one of two factors contributing to the experience of job-related stress; Allan et al. (2007) confirmed the correlation between employee control and WLC. For the teacher participants in this study, perceived control, predictability and flexibility of the work were related issues falling under the overarching theme of "Amount, pace and predictability of work." All four participants stated that their work schedule was highly predictable, with no surprises: they were always aware of their work obligations (including non-routine or extracurricular events such as school concerts or competitions) well in advance of having to fulfill those obligations. The participants also noted the highly regimented or structured nature of their classroom schedule, which served to reduce their sense of control; while they had a great deal of freedom to determine when and where they completed their non-classroom prep work and marking, these teachers felt that, during the school day, they were at the mercy of the bells and had very small chunks of time between those bells in which to accomplish their classroom tasks. This contributed to the perception of an inflexible and very fast-paced environment. Three participants also noted that, while their overall day was highly structured and predictable, what was required of them in each class period could be very unpredictable depending on such factors as student-related crises and teacher absences. Thus, these teachers



perceived themselves as having a great deal of latitude in some aspects of their work, such as curriculum delivery and non-classroom tasks, but very little control over what happened during classroom hours.

***Management support for WLB and family-friendly work culture.*** Previous research has shown a negative correlation between WLC and both management support for WLB (Allan et al., 2007) and the existence of a family-friendly work culture (ten Brummelhuis & van der Lippe, 2010). Each of the four teacher participants reported being aware of a number of WLB arrangements that were available to them, including supply teachers, parental leave, part-time work arrangements, time management courses and sabbaticals. Three of the four teacher participants felt that they received WLB support from both management and colleagues in terms of encouragement to make use of such arrangements when necessary. The fourth participant felt that, while there was overt management support for teacher WLB, there was also implicit pressure not to waste school resources on supply teachers. However, this participant did report making use of supply teachers when needed to allow her to meet her non-work obligations. These participants also reported receiving informal WLB support in the workplace by way of administrators demonstrating flexibility in finding solutions to WLC issues and colleagues pitching in to provide assistance in the classroom or for extracurricular activities as needed to allow participants to attend to personal matters.

***Meaningfulness of work.*** Meaningfulness of work (specifically, the individual's sense of his or her levels of autonomy and responsibility) has been suggested as a factor that reduces the experience of WLC (McCrea et al., 2011). All four teachers in this study reported

feeling a sense of great responsibility for their students and accountability to students, parents, colleagues and the school. Three of the four teachers also felt that they enjoyed high levels of autonomy in terms of delivery of curriculum, while the fourth felt somewhat limited in this regard because he was mindful of the academic foundation his students would be expected to have in upper-year courses in his subject. Nevertheless, he, too, believed that he had significant discretion in terms of finding new and creative ways to explain the subject matter.

***Domestic factors and personal supports.*** Grant-Vallone and Ensher (2011) found that personal support and satisfactory childcare arrangements were essential to their participants' ability to balance work and non-work obligations. For those teachers in this study who had children, the expansion of their non-work obligations contributed to their experience of WLC, reducing the time and personal resources available to them for work commitments as well as leisure activities previously enjoyed. None of the participants cited significant assistance from family members other than their partners; for the three participants who did report receiving support from their partners, they believed this greatly increased their ability to cope with role conflict.

**Application of WLC factors identified as specific to the teaching profession.** Previous research that has specifically focused on the experience of WLC in the teaching profession has identified additional WLC factors applicable to this field. The relevance of these WLC factors to the experience of the teacher participants in this study is discussed below.

***Class size.*** Cinamon et al. (2007) found that class size was one of three profession-specific factors that predicted WLC for teachers. There was little support for this WLC factor by the participants in the present study. Only one of the participants mentioned the number of students in her class; this was in the context of discussing her heavy workload and the “non-stop” pace of her work. This participant noted that she did have a classroom aide, but felt that her aide was of limited assistance since she was only in the classroom part-time and had mobility restrictions which prevented her from engaging fully with the students. This participant suggested that reducing class sizes or increasing the number of adults in the classroom would help to make the workload and sense of responsibility less burdensome.

***Investment in student misbehaviour.*** Another profession-specific WLC factor identified by Cinamon et al. (2007) is teacher investment in student misbehaviour – that is, the frustration of teacher goal attainment due to the distractions caused by students who act out. While none of the teacher participants in this study specifically raised the issue of student misbehaviour as a factor contributing to their experience of WLC or as negatively affecting their workload or stress levels, the need to deal with student misbehaviour was implied in some of the comments made, in particular, by the elementary school teachers (although they characterized this more diplomatically as a need to socialize their very young students to learn appropriate classroom etiquette).

While investment in student misbehaviour did not appear to be a major contributor to WLC for these teachers, a related factor that was identified was that of emotional investment in student needs, which fell under the overarching theme of “Self-imposed standards and emotional investment.” Both of the elementary school teachers and the middle school teacher

(but not the high school teacher) reported forming a deep emotional attachment to their students and making a heavy investment in the needs of those students, many of whom (for the elementary school teachers) came from low-income homes or families with minimal parental involvement, or what one participant described as “sad situations.” The level of caring for their students was such that these participants reported finding it very difficult to leave these issues at school and often found themselves worrying about their students while in their non-work roles. For these teachers, therefore, emotional investment in the needs of students was highly related to spillover, a concept (as noted above) referring to the extent to which workers perform work or think about work while in their non-work roles.

***Investment in parent relations.*** A third teaching-specific WLC factor identified by Cinamon et al. (2007) is investment in parent relations – that is, the extent to which teachers must deal with the intrusions caused by parent involvement. This factor was found to be relevant to the experience of WLC for the participants in this study: all four members of the teacher group reported experiencing pressure due to parents’ expectations and involvement in their work. This appeared to be particularly true for those teachers working at schools located in more affluent communities and, indeed, the affluence of the community appeared to be a separate but related factor affecting the WLC experienced by these teachers. For those teachers working in affluent communities, the pressure placed on them by parents and the community generally was often higher than that placed on those working at less affluent schools; one teacher reported that he made himself available to parents at all times of day to respond to their concerns. Teachers working in less affluent communities reported having more experiences with hostile or defensive parents than they did with the “helicopter” or

over-involved parents typically found in the affluent schools.

***Role expansion.*** Bartlett's (2004) ethnographic study of two California schools identified the expansion of the role of teachers (and how such expansion was handled on the organizational level) as a factor contributing to teacher WLC. Expansion of work roles was also relevant to the teacher participants in the current study; this factor fell under the theme of "Amount, pace and predictability of work" and was highly related to the issues of workload and work pace. Three of the four participants perceived an increase in the amount and/or the pace of work since they began their teaching careers as more and more responsibilities were assigned to teachers by the school boards. Not only did these teachers feel that the curriculum and paperwork requirements were increasing, they also felt that their duties were increasing in connection with the "whole child" philosophy of education which made them feel that they were also in many ways acting as social workers and counsellors to their students.

***Moral obligation, good teaching practice and high standards.*** Bartlett (2004) suggested that three related factors – a sense of moral obligation with respect to teaching, equating the expanded teaching role with good teaching practice and a desire to live up to high internal standards – may have been the underlying motivations that led teachers in her study to maintain their expanded work roles despite the lack of financial incentives. As discussed above, each of the teacher participants in this study reported feeling a great sense of responsibility and accountability in their role as teachers. While not all of the participants felt destined to become teachers from a young age, they all reported placing a great deal of

importance on their careers and one participant in particular stated that she believed teaching to be a calling as opposed to a job, suggesting that, consistent with Bartlett's (2004) research, for teachers there is a sense of moral obligation to carry out what is seen as very important and meaningful work.

Self-imposed expectations or standards arose as a WLC factor for all four participants, consistent with Bartlett's (2004) findings. These participants strove to improve their lesson plans from year to year, to be creative in their curriculum delivery and to tailor the content to the specific needs of each class. Participants also mentioned striving to meet or exceed the timelines set by their colleagues for marking and returning students' assignments, as well as to meet high standards for involvement in extracurricular activities and committee work regardless of the expectations of the administration or their colleagues, all of which were related to increased time spent in the work role in evenings and on weekends.

***External pressures and calls for change.*** The pressure placed on teachers due to heightened scrutiny and economically-driven calls for change from school boards, parent groups and policy-makers was a theme identified in Ballet and Kelchtermans' (2009) study of intensification in Belgian schools. As discussed previously, the teachers participating in the present study agreed that they experienced significant pressure from parents (particularly in the more affluent communities) and generally felt that the duties and responsibilities they were expected to carry out had increased since they first began their careers.

Related to these external calls for change was the theme of "Collective agreement and job security." While the interviews were being conducted for this study, the collective bargaining agreements for the Ontario boards of education were under negotiation and strike

actions were being contemplated by the teachers' unions. Rolling teacher walk-outs occurred in December 2012 and, in January 2013, the Ontario Minister of Education imposed a new contract on teachers which made any further strike action illegal. As such, the role of teachers' collective agreements was very much at the forefront of the minds of the teacher participants at the time of their interviews. All four participants noted the impact the proposed changes to the collective agreement would have on their WLB options and, while none of these teachers felt that their jobs were at risk, they did believe there was a chance that the terms of their employment could be significantly altered, such as being transferred to a different school. In addition, while all four participants were aware of some of the promotional avenues available to them, one teacher felt that these options were becoming increasingly limited as a result of budget cutbacks and austerity measures. The collective agreement and job security theme was closely related to the issue of employee morale, which is discussed further below.

**Additional WLC factors identified in this study relevant to teachers.** A number of factors related to teacher WLC were identified in this study that were not raised in the research reviewed above. These include work culture/expectations and employee morale; sources of job satisfaction/meaning; reasons for entering the teaching profession and intentions for the future; personal factors such as changes in ability to handle the workload/pace and coping strategies; and perceptions of WLC. These factors are discussed in greater detail below.

***Work culture/expectations and employee morale.*** “Work culture and community

expectations” was one of the overarching themes identified for the teacher participants in this study and included the issues of parent expectations/pressure and affluence of community discussed previously. Also included under this theme was the issue of participants’ perceptions of the work culture at their schools and the expectations they believed were placed on them. The two participants currently working at affluent schools reported finding their workplace to be a very positive work environment, with a close-knit, collegial staff and happy students. Conversely, the participants working in the mixed affluence elementary school reported working in a very fast-paced, high-stress environment in which they were constantly required to respond to student-related crises.

With respect to what was expected of them by their administration and colleagues in terms of availability during and after classroom hours, there appeared to be a great deal of consistency across schools, perhaps related to the fact that this is largely determined at the level of the collective agreement (as opposed to decided by the administration at individual schools). These teachers had a set time by which they were expected to be at school and a time before which they could not leave; the teachers also reported being required to check their email on a daily basis but were not required to carry Blackberries or make themselves available outside of regular school hours (though several participants remained in touch with colleagues outside of school for social purposes). Involvement in extracurricular activities was encouraged but not required, with the expectation of such involvement decreasing to the extent of teachers’ known non-work obligations (for example, those with young children at home). As discussed above, much of the extracurricular work taken on by these teachers was done in response to their own internal standards rather than external requirements imposed on them by the school.



Also grouped under the theme of “Work culture and community expectations” was the WLC factor of employee morale, which was also closely related to the theme of “Collective agreement and job security.” The teacher participants reported that employee morale in their workplace varied depending on the time of year (with morale being lower during busy periods), the tone set by administration (morale was low to the extent that administration was unsupportive or insensitive to the teachers’ needs) and the ongoing collective agreement negotiations (teachers felt undervalued and underappreciated for their hard work in light of what was seen as a very aggressive stance taken by the Ministry of Education, which had the effect of expanding teachers’ responsibilities and reducing the benefits to which they were entitled).

***Sources of job satisfaction/meaning.*** Meaningfulness of work – and specifically, the level of responsibility and autonomy perceived by the worker – as a factor negating the experience of WLC has been discussed above under the theme of “Self-imposed standards and emotional investment.” “Meaningfulness of work” was a separate but related theme identified for the teacher participants in this study, including the meaning codes of “importance of career” and “reasons for entering the teaching profession” (mentioned above), “sources of job satisfaction” and “intentions for the future.” All four teacher participants were able to easily identify what made their work satisfying for them: helping to empower and build the self-esteem of students and contributing to the development of future generations made the immense output required of them very rewarding for all four teachers regardless of the age level taught or the affluence of the school. Because of the satisfaction gained from working directly with students, two of the participants (the middle and high

school teachers) had no plans to move into administrative or policy-related roles later in their careers. The two elementary school teachers, on the other hand, were open to the possibility of moving into non-classroom work notwithstanding their enjoyment of student contact, with one teacher citing the reason as the physically demanding nature of the elementary school teacher's job, which she believed would not be sustainable as she got older.

***Personal factors: Changes in ability to handle workload/pace and coping strategies.***

As noted above, the extent to which the teachers had significant non-work obligations such as caring for young children was seen to have a direct effect on the resources available to them in their work roles; this was to some extent mitigated by support received by the participants' partners. Each of the teacher participants reported feeling increasingly able to handle the amount and pace of their work the more experience they gained, both as they built up their teaching resources and efficiency and as their confidence in their teaching skills grew. Three of these teachers had also developed strategies to help them cope with their work and non-work obligations, with effective scheduling practices and greater efficiency while at school being cited as common strategies. The fourth participant (who reported putting in the greatest number of hours, averaging around 60 hours of work each week as compared to the 45 hours averaged by the other participants) reported having no coping strategies in place, saying that work always came first for him and that his non-work commitments often suffered as a result.

***Perceptions of WLB.*** Three of the four teacher participants reported expecting to have high WLB when entering the teaching profession, while the fourth reported being aware

that involvement in student needs could lead to WLB. In terms of the biggest WLB challenges they faced, one participant cited time management as his biggest issue since he struggled to prioritize his work and non-work commitments. Two of the participants reported feeling like they could always give more in all aspects of their lives and that their struggle related to meeting their own high standards for themselves. The fourth participant (the high school teacher) did not characterize his situation as being problematic; he saw himself as enjoying high WLB but anticipated that this could change once he had a family.

In terms of the WLB challenges they believed were unique to the teaching profession, two of the participants felt that the rigidity of their schedule was a major challenge which was not common to other fields. Three participants also believed that the level of responsibility and breadth of the role was all-encompassing and unlike anything required of workers in any other profession. The fourth participant stated that he believed he would experience WLB challenges regardless of his profession but did think he might be able to manage his time better in a different career.

### **Factors Responsible for WLC in the Legal Profession**

**Application of universal WLC factors to the legal profession.** As noted above, the WLB literature has identified a number of universal or generic factors believed to be relevant to the experience of WLC regardless of profession, including hours worked, amount and pace of work, management support and family-friendly work culture, perceived control, flexible hours and domestic factors/personal supports. The role of these universal factors in the experience of lawyer WLC is discussed below.

***Hours worked.*** The number of hours worked was reported as a factor relevant to the experience of lawyer WLC in this study. Similar to their teacher counterparts, the number of hours worked by the lawyers ranged from 40 to 60 hours each week, depending on their area of practice, with those in a corporate/transactional practice averaged between 50 and 60 hours each week while the participant in a non-transactional practice averaged around 40 hours per week. Each of the four lawyer participants reported performing work in the evenings and on weekends, as well as being required to remain in close contact with colleagues and clients when not in the office, contributing to the perception of work obligations invading the non-work sphere. They also reported spending significant amounts of time dwelling on their work obligations when not actually working. Thus, spillover was another WLC factor applicable to these lawyers.

***Amount and pace of work.*** For the lawyers, the amount and pace of work was a major contributing factor to their experience of WLC. Workload and work pace were viewed as very high, with all four participants reporting that the amount of work they were required to complete, and the time within which they were required to complete it, often felt unmanageable, requiring them to stay well into the night or work on weekends in order to meet tight deadlines. Workload and pace were also viewed as extremely up-and-down, as discussed in the following section.

***Perceived control and flexibility of hours.*** While amount and pace of work were seen as a major contributor to WLC for the lawyers in this study, the lawyer participants viewed these factors as only part of the problem. The factor that these participants perceived as

perhaps even more problematic in terms of WLC was the unpredictability of (and lack of control over) the workflow. Three of the four participants cited unpredictability of the work as the biggest challenge to their attempts to balance work and non-work obligations (and one of the most unpleasant aspects of their job), because they often had to transition very quickly (and with little or no warning) from having no work at all to having so much work to complete and in such a short span of time that they were forced to cancel personal plans and work through the night or weekend in order to meet a deadline. These participants felt that no amount of time management would allow them to avoid these ups and downs because the workflow was driven by the demands of clients and senior lawyers (factors which are discussed further below). As such, these participants reported feeling that, in some ways, they had very little control over how much work they did or when it had to be completed.

While the lawyers in this study perceived an overall lack of control over their workload and the pace of work, they also felt that they had a great deal of freedom or control over their daily schedules. Unlike the regimented workday reported by the teachers in this study, the lawyers felt that they were largely able to work independently and could do their work when and where they liked, provided that the work assigned to them was completed within the prescribed deadlines. Technology such as Blackberries was seen as playing a role in this freedom: while the expectation that lawyers keep in touch with clients and colleagues at all times by way of Blackberries was seen as a major burden highly related to the experience of spillover as discussed above, participants also acknowledged that Blackberries contributed to their sense of freedom by allowing them to pop out to personal appointments and activities throughout the workday, subject to the need to attend specific meetings or events.

*Management support for WLB and family-friendly work culture.* Unlike their counterparts in the teacher group, the lawyers participating in this study struggled to identify WLB options offered by their firm. The WLB options they were able to identify included parental leave, reduced- or flexible-hours work arrangements and the option to work from home as necessary. However, the participants were unanimous in the belief that there was little management support for the uptake of such WLB options. Participants reported that taking the full parental leave period allowed by statute was frowned upon and seen as a sign of lack of ambition. They also noted that reduced- or flexible-hours arrangements were available only in very special circumstances, and only granted to a select few female lawyers possessing an expertise sufficiently valued by the firm to give such lawyers the leverage to negotiate such arrangements; several of the participants noted that even these special arrangements were on the decline as the firm made attempts to phase them out. Unlike their counterparts in the teacher group, the lawyers in this study also did not report receiving any WLB support from their colleagues, perhaps due at least in part to the cutthroat, competitive culture of their workplace.

In addition to the lack of management and co-worker support for WLB arrangements, the lawyer participants reported that the options technically available to them were largely infeasible. For example, one participant noted that, while it is nice to have the option to work from home, it is very difficult to get anything accomplished with small children at home. The same participant also noted that, while a reduced-hours arrangement might give him a notional day off each week, his transaction-based practice was such that he would still be required to check his Blackberry and respond to client requests during that time. Both of the female lawyers who participated in this study were on maternity leave at the time of their

interviews, and both reported that they were experiencing pressure to return to work as soon as possible; one participant also reported that she was expected to maintain connections with the firm throughout her maternity leave by way of telephonic attendance in practice group meetings.

***Meaningfulness of work.*** As noted above, high levels of autonomy and responsibility have been found to be factors reducing the experience of WLC (McCrea et al., 2011). All four lawyer participants in this study stated that they felt they had high levels of both autonomy and responsibility. Both the partners and the senior associates interviewed experienced a high level of independence in their work (although this varied depending on the client file), which the participants found to be both positive and negative: while participants took satisfaction from the ownership they felt over their work, they also reported experiencing increasing amounts of stress the higher they rose within the firm hierarchy. For example, the two participants who were partners noted that they had many of the same job requirements as associates as well as the responsibility of bringing in new clients, managing relationships with existing clients, participating in committee work and supervising junior lawyers. Such responsibilities were also increasingly being taken on by the senior associates in this study, who reported experiencing higher levels of stress as they took on an increasingly client-facing role within the firm, including taking an active part in business development activities and supervising the work of junior associates.

Other factors related to meaningfulness of work are discussed further below.

***Domestic factors and personal supports.*** Three of the four lawyer participants had

young children, including two with newborns. For these participants, hobbies previously enjoyed had, to some extent, fallen by the wayside with the arrival of their children, although one participant reported making a conscious effort to maintain her social calendar notwithstanding her parenting obligations. One of the participants had a full-time nanny and one had a child in daycare prior to taking her second maternity leave. These two participants reported finding it challenging to leave work in time to relieve the nanny or pick their child up from daycare, and both reported that they often left work “early” (that is, at 5:30 or 6:00 pm) to spend time with their children and then did several additional hours of work after the children went to bed.

In terms of personal supports, the three lawyers who were married stated that they received support from their spouses in terms of sharing non-work obligations and picking up additional tasks that the lawyers were no longer able to perform when new work obligations arose. The fourth participant reported that his partner and friends supported him by being understanding of the unpredictability of his schedule and that those friends who were not so understanding tended to fall away over time.

**Application of WLC factors specific to the legal profession.** Previous research that has specifically focused on the experience of WLC in the legal profession has identified additional WLC factors applicable to this field. The relevance of these WLC factors to the experience of the lawyer participants in this study is discussed below.

***Work commitment.*** Work commitment (the extent to which work in general is of central importance to an individual) and professional commitment (the extent to which an



individual is loyal to his or her specific career) are factors which have been found to be correlated with the number of hours worked by law firm lawyers, perhaps because those who place high importance on their work are typically willing to devote a great deal of their time to that work (Wallace, 1997). All four of the lawyer participants in this study reported placing high importance on work generally and on their legal career specifically. While two participants reported that they might find other careers equally fulfilling, two participants said that being a lawyer was an important part of their identity and that, despite all the challenges of the job, they would likely miss it if they were no longer lawyers.

***Work motivators.*** Wallace's (1997) study suggests that work motivators such as the availability of promotional opportunities and the perceived social value of work (that is, the extent to which work is seen as beneficial to society) may negate the perception of spillover (or reduce the negative view of such spillover) for those working long hours because they view those hours as an investment in their career or as intrinsically rewarding due to the resulting social benefit. The results of this study are consistent with Wallace's findings: all four participants reported experiencing high levels of spillover (which was viewed very negatively) and three of the four participants reported believing that their promotional opportunities were very limited and that the security of their jobs was increasingly up in the air. One participant noted that the importance she placed on her career (the concept of "work commitment" discussed above) was on the decline as she became increasingly uncertain about her future with the firm. In light of their uncertainty about the future, three of the participants (including both partners and one senior associate) reported that they had no specific career plans and hoped to simply be able to continue in their current roles as long as

they could; the senior associate said that she would be open to partnership if it was offered to her but, as she had low expectations of this occurring, she hoped to at least be able to amass sufficient work experience to allow her to qualify for an in-house counsel position when she was asked to leave. The other senior associate in this study was actively looking for in-house counsel positions in the belief that her days with the firm were limited.

In addition to the belief that they had limited career prospects, none of the four participants cited the social value of their work as a source of meaning or job satisfaction. In fact, several of the participants reported struggling to find meaning and fulfillment in the work sphere and reported that, while they did experience some intrinsic motivation in the form of succeeding in meeting the challenges of the legal work they performed and being helpful to clients and junior lawyers, many of the factors that kept them going were extrinsic motivators such as prestige, respect and financial security. It is perhaps telling that only one of the four participants reported having an interest in law from a young age, while all four reported financial stability as being a primary factor in their career choice.

***Work pressures.*** Previous research has shown a strong correlation between work pressures such as work overload (discussed above) and the profit-driven nature of law firms, on the one hand, and the experience of spillover, on the other (Wallace, 1997). One major theme related to the profit-driven nature of law that was identified in the present study was that of “Work culture and client demands.” This theme included the WLC factor of unpredictability/perceived control discussed above. Also falling under this theme were the factors of work culture/expectations and client demands. Specifically, participants felt intense pressure to meet a standard of perfection, to be highly responsive to the last-minute or

unreasonable demands of senior lawyers and clients (requiring them to make themselves available for work at all times of day and night, including while on vacation) and to meet a high annual billable hours target – a major source of stress for all four participants in light of the up-and-down nature of the workflow, which meant that there were often extended periods of time in which participants were not doing billable work, thus forcing them to work around the clock later in the year in an attempt to make up for those lost hours. One participant cited these work expectations (and, specifically, the expectations regarding billable hours) as the biggest WLC challenge she faced.

The stress of meeting the expectations of the firm and its clients was strongly related to the issue of employee morale. Morale was perceived by one participant to decline when the work pace slowed since it caused lawyers to fear for their job security. Another participant agreed, noting that morale was low as a result of the recession and firm management's increasing emphasis on maximizing profits rather than on the retention of legal talent. Another participant felt that morale was related to the impossibly high standards set by the firm since lawyers invariably feel like they are failing to meet the expectation that they perform (on a very quick turnaround basis) large quantities of billable work satisfying a standard of perfection.

**Additional WLC factors identified in this study relevant to lawyers.** Most of the factors related to lawyer WLC identified in this study were either identified in previous research or were closely related to those factors, as discussed above. Two additional factors not already discussed were the coping strategies used by the lawyers in this study and their perceptions of WLC.

***Coping strategies.*** One coping strategy used by the lawyer participants was hiring others to perform the non-work obligations they did not have time to perform themselves (for example, nannies, daycare and cleaning services). Other coping strategies included assessing the urgency of tasks and prioritizing them accordingly, attempting to compartmentalize work and non-work time to minimize spillover and only making plans that could easily be cancelled. Another main coping strategy was acceptance: three of the participants noted that they found themselves better able to handle the law firm lifestyle when they began to see that lifestyle as a choice they had made and were able to accept that, as long as they chose to continue working at the firm, they would need to tolerate the heavy, unpredictable workload and the unreasonable demands that were routinely placed on them. Thus, consistent with Karasek's (1979) theory of the role of perceived control in job stress, these participants became better able to manage their job demands when they began to perceive themselves as having agency in their own work lives.

***Perceptions of WLB.*** Another factor not noted in the previous research was that of lawyer perceptions of WLB. Not one of the lawyer participants reported having any particular expectations with respect to lifestyle generally (other than financial security) and, specifically, none of these participants reported expecting to experience WLC when entering the legal profession. As noted above, for three of the participants, the biggest challenge to WLB was the unpredictability of their schedules and the up-and-down nature of the workflow, since it precluded them from making concrete plans in their non-work spheres and resulted in work often intruding into their evenings, weekends and vacation time. For the fourth participant, the work expectations were the biggest challenge to WLB – that is, this

participant felt that she was required to work incredibly hard to meet the billable hours target and be totally available at all times and yet still felt that she was constantly failing at her job because of the impossibility of attaining perfection. Three of the four participants believed that these challenges were unique to the law firm environment while the fourth, whose spouse was in what he viewed as an equally demanding profession, believed that the WLC problems characteristic of law firms were also an issue in other professional service fields such as investment banking and private equity.

### **Comparison of Experience of WLC in Teaching and Legal Professions**

As demonstrated above, there was a great deal of overlap in the factors responsible for WLC experienced by the teachers and lawyers who participated in this study. There was some support for each of the universal WLC factors for both the teacher and lawyer groups, although the application of these factors was quite different in some cases. For example, for teachers, the highly predictable and rigid nature of their schedules made it difficult (if not impossible) for them to attend to personal matters during school hours but gave them the freedom to make social plans well into the future. Conversely, for lawyers, the totally unpredictable but fluid nature of their schedules precluded them from making long-term plans but gave them the latitude to come and go as necessary throughout the day. Thus, certain factors increasing WLC appeared to be relevant to members of both groups but worked in opposite directions.

Interestingly, and perhaps contrary to popular perception, lawyers and teachers did not appear to differ with respect to many factors believed to increase WLC, including the number of hours worked, work pace and the occurrence of spillover (though perceptions did

differ both between and within groups with respect to the heaviness of the workload).

Teachers and lawyers did, however, differ in several important and related respects: sources of job satisfaction/meaning, origins of the standards and expectations to which these participants were held and the nature and perceptions of the spillover they experienced. The teachers in this study reported working long, hard hours in response to self-imposed standards of achievement and took great satisfaction from knowing that, through their direct efforts, they were helping to empower their students and build their self-esteem, contributing significantly to their development into high-functioning members of society; they experienced spillover as a result of their deep investment in the needs of their students, which led to genuine concern and worry for those students in their non-work time. The lawyers, on the other hand, worked long, hard hours largely in response to the external standards placed on them by colleagues and clients and a fear of being reprimanded or even fired for failing to meet those standards. These participants struggled to find meaning in their work and did not report seeing any social value to their efforts, with the rewards for their labours instead coming in the form of high salary and prestige; spillover resulted from their efforts to earn these extrinsic rewards and a fear of failure to meet the expectations of colleagues and clients.

As discussed previously, the existence of work motivators such as the availability of promotional opportunities and the social value of work may reduce the negative perception of work pressures and spillover because of the intrinsic rewards of the work (Wallace, 1997). Working hard to meet internal standards of care and professionalism is very different from working hard to avoid being fired. As such, while the amount of spillover may not have been markedly different for the teachers and lawyers in this study, the extent to which that

spillover was viewed negatively differed greatly. For the teachers, spillover was seen as a small price to pay for the intrinsically rewarding work of helping students. For the lawyers, work and thoughts of work spilling over into non-work time was a major source of resentment and stress because it was not compensated for by intrinsic rewards which increased their resiliency to WLC but, rather, was viewed as a necessary part of the job, performed in order to avoid negative feedback or termination.

### **Relevance of Study to WLB Policies and Clinical Practice**

The results of this study suggest that the factors that increase the experience of WLC, such as number of hours worked, workload, work pace and spillover, may play less of a role in the experience of WLC than factors that increase the ability to cope with (or reduce the negative perception of) WLC, such as meaningfulness, locus of performance standards (internal versus external) and sources of job satisfaction (intrinsic versus extrinsic). With the exception of one teacher participant, both the teacher and lawyer groups reported experiencing high WLC in terms of factors such as long work hours, heavy workload and spillover; however, the teacher participants appeared to experience lower levels of resentment and stress and higher levels of coping and resiliency than their counterparts in the legal profession. These results suggest that efforts to increase WLB on both the individual and policy level should focus at least as much on increasing resiliency factors (such as meaningfulness of work, intrinsic sources of job satisfaction and internalization of work expectations and standards) as on addressing factors that increase WLC (such as hours worked, workload/pace and spillover).

To the extent that job demands and stressors are unlikely to change in the near future

(as in the law firm setting), it may also be helpful (particularly in the therapeutic context) to focus on acceptance and individual agency as a way of increasing the ability to cope with those job demands and stressors. As noted above, one of the main coping strategies used by the lawyers in this study was acceptance of their current circumstances, with participants experiencing a major shift in their ability to handle their job demands once they replaced their view of themselves as helpless victims with one in which they acknowledged that they were making a choice to continue working in the law firm setting and could leave it whenever they decided that the extrinsic rewards of the job were no longer sufficient to compensate for the sacrifices being made in other aspects of their lives.

Several participants also made recommendations for practical steps that could be taken to increase their ability to balance their work and non-work obligations. For the teacher group, these included building in time during the workday when teachers might reflect on broader teaching practice matters (either alone or with colleagues) and increasing the number of social workers and aides in schools to reduce the pressure on teachers to perform these roles in addition to their teaching obligations. The lawyers struggled to identify potential WLB solutions absent a complete overhaul of the law firm incentive structure. One participant did suggest that increasing the availability of flexible and telecommuting work arrangements would reduce WLC, while another suggested technological upgrades to reduce the extent to which lawyers were slowed down in their work by outdated computer systems. Participants in both groups also suggested that, on an individual level, reducing procrastination and increasing overall efficiency in the workplace would go a long way to freeing up additional time for non-work commitments.



### **Strengths, Limitations and Implications for Future Research**

The transferability of the results of this study is limited by the small and homogenous research sample. As such, these findings must be viewed as preliminary in nature, requiring replication with a larger and more representative sample. Nevertheless, this study is, to the knowledge of the author, the first phenomenological study comparing the experience of WLC in members of two professions in Canada. The use of such a design allowed for the identification and in-depth examination of WLC factors not examined previously as well as allowing for the confirmation of the application of universal and profession-specific WLC factors identified in previous research.

The findings of this study also suggest a number of areas for future study. For example, since there appeared to be many differences in the WLC experienced by those teaching elementary versus high school students and those teaching students of varying affluence levels, future research could focus on comparing the experience of WLC of teachers at different educational levels and those teaching in affluent versus less affluent communities. Since meaningfulness and intrinsic sources of job satisfaction seemed to be factors largely lacking for lawyers in the business law firm setting, future research could examine the WLC experience of lawyers working in other legal settings, such as crown attorneys, pro bono lawyers or lawyers advocating on behalf of causes of importance to them (for example, human rights or environmental lawyers). As well, a multiple case studies approach may provide rich data with respect to the interaction within individual professionals of the many WLC and resiliency factors discussed in this study. Finally, since members of the teacher and lawyer groups reported experiencing a change in stress or ability to handle their job demands as their experience level increased, longitudinal studies examining the

experience of WLC over the life span appear to be warranted.

### **Summary**

Notwithstanding the limitations identified above, the findings of this study support the application of the universal WLC factors to law firm lawyers and teachers as well as providing confirmation of many of the profession-specific WLC factors identified in previous studies. Despite the differences in work cultures and job requirements, the commonalities in the experience of WLC appear to exceed the differences experienced by teachers and lawyers, particularly with respect to WLC factors such as hours worked, workload, work pace and spillover. The factors that appear to primarily account for the differences in the experience of WLC are those which affect resiliency to WLC, such that for teachers, who are largely intrinsically motivated and rewarded and who work hard to meet internal standards of practice, there is a greater ability to cope with WLC than there is for lawyers, who are primarily motivated to respond to external pressures and gain extrinsic rewards.

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## APPENDIX A: Letter of Information

**FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR WORK-LIFE CONFLICT:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY****LETTER OF INFORMATION****Introduction**

My name is Waleska Vernon and I am a Master's student in Counselling Psychology at the Faculty of Education at Western University. As research assistant for Dr. Alan Leschied, I am currently conducting research comparing the factors responsible for work-life conflict experienced by lawyers and teachers and would like to invite you to participate in this study.

**Purpose of the study**

The aims of this study are to determine whether the factors responsible for work-life conflict experienced by lawyers and teachers are generalizable to other professions or whether such factors are profession-specific. I will be interviewing 4 lawyers and 4 teachers having a minimum of 5 years of experience in their field.

**If you agree to participate**

If you agree to participate in this study I will conduct a one-on-one interview with you regarding your experience of work-life conflict at a time and in a location that is convenient to you. The interview will take approximately 1.5 hours to complete. The interview will be audio-recorded and transcribed into written format. I may also contact you with any follow-up questions I may have regarding your interview responses if applicable. Following the completion of data analysis, I will also contact you to confirm the accuracy of the themes identified as a result of my analysis. It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete this accuracy check.

**Confidentiality**

The information collected by me will be used in my thesis for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information which could identify you will be used in any presentation of the study results. If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used and no information that discloses your identity will be released or published without your specific consent to the disclosure. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. Audio recordings of our interview and any follow-up interviews we may have

will be destroyed following their transcription. However, an electronic copy of the written transcriptions of these interviews, which will not contain your name or other identifying information, will be retained in Dr. Leschied's files for 5 years.

**Risks & Benefits**

There are no known risks to participating in this study. However, if you would like to speak to someone regarding any issues you are facing related to work-life conflict, please contact my thesis supervisor, Dr. Alan Leschied, Psychologist, at [contact information redacted].

**Voluntary Participation**

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

**No Waiver of Rights**

You do not waive any legal rights by signing the attached consent form.

**Questions**

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, Western University, at [contact information redacted]. If you have any questions about this study, please contact Waleska Vernon at [contact information redacted], or Dr. Alan Leschied at [contact information redacted].

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Waleska Vernon  
M.Ed. (Counselling Psychology) candidate, 2013  
Western University

## Appendix B: Consent Form

**FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR WORK-LIFE CONFLICT:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY**

Waleska Vernon  
M.Ed. (Counselling Psychology) candidate, 2013  
Western University

Supervisor: Dr. Alan Leschied  
Professor  
Western University

**CONSENT FORM**

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX C: Background Information Questionnaire

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Marital status: Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Cohabiting \_\_\_\_\_ Separated \_\_\_\_\_  
Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_
3. If cohabitating or married, does your partner also do paid work?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
4. If cohabitating or married, are you the breadwinner in the family?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you have children? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_
6. If you answered “yes” to question 5, how many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_
7. If you answered “yes” to question 5, what are the ages of your children?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. If you answered “yes” to question 5, what are your childcare arrangements?  
Stay-at-home partner \_\_\_\_\_  
Family member looks after children during the day \_\_\_\_\_  
Full-time daycare \_\_\_\_\_ Part-time daycare \_\_\_\_\_  
Full-time nanny \_\_\_\_\_ Part-time nanny \_\_\_\_\_  
Children in school full-time \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D: Semi-structured Interview Questions

Questions focused on career expectations when entering the field:

1. Is this your first career? If not, what did you do before joining this profession? What caused you to leave your previous profession?
2. How long have you been working in your current field?
3. What attracted you to this field in general, and to your current job in particular?
4. What were your expectations with respect to lifestyle in general, and work-life conflict in particular, when you entered this profession?

Questions focused on number of hours worked:

5. How many hours do you work per week, on average?

Questions focused on workload or work pressure:

6. How would you describe the amount of work you are required to complete each week, on average?
7. How would you describe the pace of work in your workplace?
8. Have there been any changes to the amount or type of work you are required to complete, or the time within which you are required to complete it, since you first started this career?

Questions focused on work spillover:

9. How much time would you say you spend thinking about work once you have left your workplace for the day?
10. How much time do you spend doing work in the evenings or on weekends?
11. To what extent do you stay available or connected to your employer or colleagues in the evenings and on weekends through devices such as Blackberries?

Questions focused on management support and work culture:

12. How would you describe the culture in your workplace?
13. How would you describe employee morale in your workplace?
14. What are the expectations in your workplace with respect to hours worked, hours spent in the workplace and availability when away from the workplace (e.g., through Blackberries)?

15. What types of arrangements are available in your workplace to help employees balance their work and non-work commitments and obligations?
16. To what extent do employees in your workplace take advantage of these types of arrangements?
17. In what other ways do employees in your workplace generally manage their non-work obligations?
18. Is there anything else your employer could do to help you manage your work and non-work obligations and commitments?

Questions focused on perceived control:

19. How predictable is your work schedule?
20. How much freedom do you have to determine how many hours you work each week?
21. How much freedom do you have to determine when and where you complete your work?
22. If you work in the evenings or on weekends, are you able to do this work at home?

Questions focused on coping strategies:

23. How do you generally spend your time outside of work?
24. What kinds of activities do you do for relaxation or leisure?
25. Describe any strategies you have in place for managing your various work and non-work commitments, obligations and leisure activities.
26. To what extent do you receive support or assistance from your partner (if married or cohabitating), other family members, co-workers and friends to help you manage your time?
27. Is there anything you feel you could do to better manage your time?

Other prompts regarding challenges to work-life balance:

28. What do you see as the biggest challenges to managing your work and non-work commitments and obligations?
29. Of these challenges, which (if any) do you believe are specific to your particular work environment?
30. To what extent have your work and non-work commitments and obligations changed since you first started working in this field?

Questions focused on role importance and meaningfulness of work:

- 31. How important is your career to you?
- 32. How much responsibility or autonomy do you have in your workplace?
- 33. What makes your career fulfilling or meaningful to you?

Questions focused on career intentions for the future:

- 34. When you first began your current career, how long did you plan on staying?
- 35. How do you feel about your future prospects within your organization in terms of job security and promotional opportunities?
- 36. What are your current plans for the future with respect to your career?

## APPENDIX E: Methodology for Coding

### **Teacher Themes**

#### **Theme 1: Amount, pace and predictability of work**

- *Hours worked:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How many hours do you work per week on average?”
- *Workload:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How would you describe the amount of work you’re required to complete each week on average?”
- *Work pace/intensity:*
  - Direct responses to question “How would you describe the pace of work in your workplace?”
  - Use of terms such as “pace”, “intensity”, “presence-oriented”, “all-consuming”
- *Expansion of work roles:*
  - Direct responses to question, “To what extent have your work and non-work commitments and obligations changed since you first started working in this field?”
  - Direct responses to question, “Have there been any changes to the amount or type of work you’re required to complete or the time in which you’re required to complete it since you first started this career?”
  - Words and phrases such as “whole child”, references to curriculum additions and references to multiple roles within teaching role (e.g., acting as social worker, psychiatrist)
- *Spillover:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How much time would you say you spend thinking about work once you’ve left your workplace for the day?”
  - Direct responses to question, “How much time do you spend doing work in the evenings and on weekends?”
  - Direct responses to question, “To what extent do you stay available or connected to your employer or colleagues in the evenings and weekends through devices such as Blackberries?”
  - References to extra-curricular involvement
- *Perceived control/predictability/flexibility:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How predictable is your work schedule?”
  - Direct responses to question, “How much freedom do you have to determine how many hours you work each week?”
  - Direct responses to question, “How much freedom do you have to determine when and where you complete your work?”
  - Direct responses to question, “If you work in the evenings or on weekends, are you able to do this work from home?”
  - Words and phrases such as, “freedom”, “flexibility”, “rigid”, “self-directed”

## **Theme 2: Self-imposed standards and emotional investment**

- *Emotional investment in student needs:*
  - Words and phrases such as “sad situations”, “emotional”, “affective”, “worrying about them”
- *Self-imposed expectations/standards/pressure:*
  - Words and phrases such as “expectations we have for ourselves as teachers”, “hard on myself”, “push myself”
- *Responsibility/accountability:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How much responsibility or autonomy do you have in your workplace?”
  - Words and phrases such as “leader”, “responsibility”, “liability”
- *Autonomy:*
  - Words and phrases such as “self-directed”, “self-monitoring”, “professional judgment”

## **Theme 3: Meaningfulness of work**

- *Reasons for entering teaching profession:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What attracted you to this field in general and to your current job in particular?”
- *Importance of career:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How important is your career to you?”
- *Sources of job satisfaction/meaning:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How important is your career to you?”
  - Direct responses to question, “What makes your career fulfilling or meaningful to you?”
- *Intentions for future:*
  - Direct responses to question, “When you first began your career, how long did you plan on staying?”
  - Direct responses to question, “What are your current plans for the future with respect to your career?”

## **Theme 4: Collective agreement and job security**

- *Changes to collective agreement:*
  - Words and phrases such as “negotiation”, “talks”, “collective agreement”, “strike”
- *Job security:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How do you feel about your future prospects within your organization in terms of job security and promotional opportunities?”
  - Words and phrases such as “surpluses”, “jobs have been cut”, “climate of insecurity”
- *Promotional opportunities:*

- Direct responses to question, “How do you feel about your future prospects within your organization in terms of job security and promotional opportunities?”

### **Theme 5: Work culture and community expectations**

- *Work culture/expectations:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How would you describe the culture in your workplace?”
  - Direct responses to question, “What are the expectations in your workplace with respect to hours worked, hours spent in the workplace, and availability when away from the office, for example through Blackberries?”
  - Words and phrases such as “expect”, “expectation”
- *Parent expectations/pressure/involvement:*
  - Words and phrases such as “expectations from parents”, “parents want”, “community”
- *Affluence of community:*
  - Words and phrases such as “socioeconomic status”, “well off”, “extreme poverty”
- *Employee morale:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How would you describe employee morale in your workplace?”
  - Words such as “demoralizing”

### **Theme 6: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements**

- *Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What types of arrangements are available in your workplace to help employees balance their work and non-work commitments and obligations?”
- *Management support for WLB arrangements:*
  - Words and phrases such as “implicit pressure” and “principal” in context of questions regarding WLB arrangements
- *Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements:*
  - Direct responses to questions, “To what extent do employees in your workplace take advantage of these types of arrangements?”
- *WLB support from colleagues:*
  - Direct responses to questions such as, “Do you talk to your colleagues about those issues [student problems] at all?”
  - Responses to question, “In what other ways do employees generally manage their non-work obligations?”

### **Theme 7: Personal factors: challenges and coping strategies**

- *Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles:*

- Direct responses to question, “How do you generally spend your time outside of work?”
- Direct responses to question, “What kinds of activities do you generally do for relaxation or leisure?”
- Direct responses to question, “To what extent have your work and non-work commitments and obligations changed since you first started working in this field?”
- References to having children since becoming a teacher
- *Changes in ability to handle workload/pace:*
  - Direct responses to question, “Have there been any changes to the amount or type of work you’re required to complete or the time in which you’re required to complete it since you first started this career?”
- *WLB support from family/friends:*
  - Direct responses to question, “To what extent do you receive support or assistance from your partner, other family members, coworkers and friends to help you manage your time?”
- *Coping strategies:*
  - Direct responses to question, “In what other ways do employees in your workplace generally manage their non-work obligations?”
  - Direct responses to question, “Describe any strategies you have in place for managing your various work and non-work commitments, obligations and leisure activities”
  - Words and phrases such as, “compartmentalize”, “strategy”

### **Theme 8: Teacher perceptions of WLB: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions**

- *WLB expectations when entering profession:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What were your expectations with respect to lifestyle in general and WLC in particular when you entered the profession?”
- *Biggest WLB challenges:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What do you see as the biggest challenges to managing your work and non-work commitments and obligations?”
- *WLB challenges specific teaching:*
  - Direct responses to question regarding whether challenges identified are specific to the participant’s particular environment
- *Potential WLB solutions:*
  - Direct responses to question, “Is there anything else your employer could do to help you manage your work and non-work commitments and obligations?”
  - Direct responses to question, “Is there anything you feel you could do to better manage your time?”



## **Lawyer Themes**

### **Theme 1: Amount and pace of work**

- *Hours worked:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How many hours do you work per week on average?”
  - Phrases such as “a great amount of time that you have to spend in the office”
- *Workload:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How would you describe the amount of work you’re required to complete each week on average?”
  - Words such as “workload”
- *Work pace:*
  - Direct responses to question “How would you describe the pace of work in your workplace?”
  - Use of terms such as “pace”, “response time”, “immediate”, “immediacy”
- *Spillover:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How much time would you say you spend thinking about work once you’ve left your workplace for the day?”
  - Direct responses to question, “How much time do you spend doing work in the evenings and on weekends?”
  - Direct responses to question, “To what extent do you stay available or connected to your employer or colleagues in the evenings and weekends through devices such as Blackberries?”

### **Theme 2: Meaningfulness, responsibility and security of work**

- *Reasons for entering legal profession:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What attracted you to this field in general and to your current job in particular?”
  - Responses to question as to why participant left previous career, where applicable
- *Importance of career:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How important is your career to you?”
- *Sources of job satisfaction/meaning:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How important is your career to you?”
  - Direct responses to question, “What makes your career fulfilling or meaningful to you?”
- *Responsibility/autonomy:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How much responsibility or autonomy do you have in your workplace?”
  - Words and phrases such as “responsibilities”
- *Increased stress with increased seniority:*
  - Direct responses to question, “To what extent have your work and non-work commitments and obligations changed since you first started working in this field?”

- Phrases such as “more onerous...because I’ve become more senior”; “I haven’t been cut off the way a lot of people do when they become partner”; “much more of a sense of urgency about building a book of business”
- *Promotional opportunities:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How do you feel about your future prospects within your organization in terms of job security and promotional opportunities?”
  - Phrases such as “income partner”, “equity partner”, “passed over for partnership”
- *Job security:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How do you feel about your future prospects within your organization in terms of job security and promotional opportunities?”
  - Phrases such as “people are scared”, “fear in the workplace”, “chopping block”
- *Intentions for future:*
  - Direct responses to question, “When you first began your career, how long did you plan on staying?”
  - Direct responses to question, “What are your current plans for the future with respect to your career?”

### **Theme 3: Work culture and client demands**

- *Unpredictability/perceived control:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How predictable is your work schedule?”
  - Direct responses to question, “How much freedom do you have to determine how many hours you work each week”
  - Direct responses to question, “How much freedom do you have to determine when and where you complete your work?”
  - Direct responses to question, “If you work in the evenings or on weekends, are you able to do this work from home?”
  - Words and phrases such as, “lack of predictability”, “impossible to ever control”, “freedom”, “flexibility”, “it is what it is”, “that is the nature of the workplace”, “not that any of us can ever judge on any given day what we’re going to have to do”, “choose”, “decide”, “accept”
- *Work culture/expectations:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How would you describe the culture in your workplace?”
  - Direct responses to question, “What are the expectations in your workplace with respect to hours worked, hours spent in the workplace, and availability when away from the office, for example through Blackberries?”
  - Words and phrases such as “expect”, “expectation”, “perfect”, “perfectionist”, “the level of quality and precision that people want”, the phrase “what we’re being asked to do”; references to billable hours target
- *Client demands:*
  - Phrases such as “client demands”, “client deadlines”

- *Employee morale:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How would you describe employee morale in your workplace?”
  - Phrases such as “people are scared”, “fear in the workplace”

#### **Theme 4: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements**

- *Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What types of arrangements are available in your workplace to help employees balance their work and non-work commitments and obligations?”
- *Management support for WLB arrangements:*
  - References to job security of individuals with special arrangements (e.g., “X is on the chopping block for that very reason as far as I’m aware”); phrases such as “frowned on”, “most people think they’re peculiar for doing that [taking parental leave]”
- *Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements:*
  - Direct responses to questions, “To what extent do employees in your workplace take advantage of these types of arrangements?”
  - Direct responses to questions such as, “Do you know any men who’ve done it [taken parental leave]?”
  - References to specific individuals who have special arrangements and their perceived job security (e.g., “X is on the chopping block for that very reason as far as I’m aware”)

#### **Theme 5: Personal factors: challenges and coping strategies**

- *Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles:*
  - Direct responses to question, “How do you generally spend your time outside of work?”
  - Direct responses to question, “What kinds of activities do you generally do for relaxation or leisure?”
  - References to having children since becoming a lawyer
- *WLB support from family:*
  - Direct responses to question, “To what extent do you receive support or assistance from your partner, other family members, coworkers and friends to help you manage your time?”
- *Coping strategies:*
  - Direct responses to question, “In what other ways do employees in your workplace generally manage their non-work obligations?”
  - Direct responses to question, “Describe any strategies you have in place for managing your various work and non-work commitments, obligations and leisure activities”
  - Phrases such as, “trying to separate work from home”

## **Theme 6: Lawyer perceptions of WLC: Expectations, challenges and potential solutions**

- *WLB expectations when entering profession:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What were your expectations with respect to lifestyle in general and WLC in particular when you entered the profession?”
- *Biggest WLB challenges:*
  - Direct responses to question, “What do you see as the biggest challenges to managing your work and non-work commitments and obligations?”
  - Direct responses to question, “Is there anything else your employer could do to help you manage your work and non-work commitments and obligations?”
  - Phrases such as “worst part of my job”
- *WLB challenges specific to law firm:*
  - Direct responses to question regarding whether challenges identified are specific to the participant’s particular environment
- *Potential WLB solutions:*
  - Direct responses to question, “Is there anything you feel you could do to better manage your time?”
  - Phrases such as “one thing the firm could do”

## Appendix F: List of Themes and Related Meaning Codes

### **Teacher Themes**

#### **Theme 1: Amount, pace and predictability of work**

- Hours worked
- Workload
- Work pace/intensity
- Expansion of work roles
- Perceived control/predictability/flexibility
- Spillover

#### **Theme 2: Self-imposed standards and emotional investment**

- Emotional investment in student needs
- Self-imposed expectations/standards/pressure
- Responsibility/accountability
- Autonomy

#### **Theme 3: Meaningfulness of work**

- Reasons for entering teaching profession
- Importance of career
- Sources of job satisfaction/meaning
- Intentions for the future

#### **Theme 4: Collective agreement and job security**

- Changes to collective agreement
- Job security
- Promotional opportunities

#### **Theme 5: Work culture and community expectations**

- Work culture/expectations
- Parent expectations/pressure/involvement
- Affluence of community
- Employee morale

#### **Theme 6: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements**

- Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements
- Management support for WLB arrangements
- Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements
- WLB support from colleagues

#### **Theme 7: Personal factors: challenges and coping strategies**

- Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles
- Changes in ability to handle workload/pace
- WLB support from family

- Coping strategies

**Theme 8: Teacher perceptions of WLB – expectations, challenges and potential solutions**

- WLB expectations when entering profession
- Biggest WLB challenges
- WLB challenges specific to teaching
- Potential WLB solutions

## **Lawyer Themes**

### **Theme 1: Amount and pace of work**

- Hours worked
- Workload
- Work pace
- Spillover

### **Theme 2: Meaningfulness, responsibility and security of work**

- Reasons for entering legal profession
- Importance of career
- Sources of job satisfaction/meaning
- Responsibility/autonomy
- Increased stress with increased seniority
- Promotional opportunities
- Job security
- Intentions for the future

### **Theme 3: Work culture and client demands**

- Unpredictability/perceived control
- Work culture/expectations (perfectionism, responsiveness and billable hours)
- Client demands
- Employee morale

### **Theme 4: Availability and uptake of WLB arrangements**

- Availability/awareness of WLB arrangements
- Management support for WLB arrangements
- Uptake/feasibility of WLB arrangements

### **Theme 5: Personal factors: challenges and coping strategies**

- Non-work activities and expansion of non-work roles
- WLB support from family
- Coping strategies

### **Theme 6: Lawyer perceptions of WLC – expectations, challenges and potential solutions**

- WLB expectations when entering profession
- Biggest WLB challenges
- WLB challenges specific to law firm
- Potential WLB solutions

## Curriculum Vitae

<b>Name:</b>	Waleska Vernon
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